Peace for all people and for God's friends,
And to those who turn to God in their hearts.
Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Glory to God in the highest.
And peace to God's people on earth.

HYMN

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus," "All Earth Is Waiting," "People, Look East," "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry," "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," "Hail to the Lord's Anointed," and "Lift Up Your Heads" are especially suitable.

If the hymn is to be an entrance song with procession, it precedes the greeting.

OPENING PRAYER

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray. *A brief pause.*

God of Israel,
with expectant hearts
we your people await Christ's coming.
As once he came in humility,
so now may he come in glory,
that he may make all things perfect
in your everlasting kingdom.
For he is Lord for ever and ever. **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Those appointed may process to the place of the wreath in the front of the sanctuary. While the candle is lighted, appropriate texts may be read, recited, or sung. In some instances, the Advent wreath ceremony may be combined with the opening hymn, as when "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" is used.

FIRST LESSON

First Sunday	Isaiah 2:1-5	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Isaiah 64:1-9	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Jeremiah 33:14-16	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Second Sunday	Isaiah 11:1-10	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Isaiah 40:1-11	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Baruch 5:1-9 *or* Malachi 3:1-4	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Third Sunday	Isaiah 35:1-10	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Zephaniah 3:14-20	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Fourth Sunday	Isaiah 7:10-16	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	II Samuel 7:1-11, 16	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Micah 5:2-5*a*	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)

PSALM

First Sunday	Psalm 122	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Psalm 80:1-7	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Psalm 25:1-10	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Second Sunday	Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Luke 1:68-79	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Third Sunday	Psalm 146:5-10 *or* Luke 1:47-55	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Psalm 126 *or* Luke 1:47-55	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Isaiah 12:2-6	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Fourth Sunday	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Luke 1:47-55 *or* Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Luke 1:47-55 *or* Psalm 80:1-7	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)

SECOND LESSON

First Sunday	Romans 13:11-14	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	I Corinthians 1:3-9	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	I Thessalonians 3:9-13	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Second Sunday	Romans 15:4-13	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	II Peter 3:8-15*a*	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Philippians 1:3-11	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Third Sunday	James 5:7-10	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	I Thessalonians 5:16-24	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Philippians 4:4-7	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Fourth Sunday	Romans 1:1-7	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Romans 16:25-27	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Hebrews 10:5-10	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)

HYMN OR ANTHEM

GOSPEL

First Sunday	Matthew 24:36-44	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Mark 13:24-37	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Luke 21:25-36	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Second Sunday	Matthew 3:1-12	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Mark 1:1-8	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Luke 3:1-6	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Third Sunday	Matthew 11:2-11	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	John 1:6-8, 19-28	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Luke 3:7-18	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Fourth Sunday	Matthew 1:18-25	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Luke 1:26-38	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Luke 1:39-55 (46-55)	(Year C: 1994, 1997, 2000)

SERMON

CREED

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE OR PASTORAL PRAYER

To each petition responding: **Savior of the nations, hear our prayer.**

Grant that we, who have known the mystery
of that Light on earth,
may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven;
where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns,
one God, in glory everlasting.
Amen.

ACT OF PRAISE or ANTHEM

"Glory Be to God on High" (*Gloria in Excelsis*)

[LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT AND CHRIST CANDLES]

See previous services for alternative action and texts.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Lord, open our minds and hearts
by the power of your Holy Spirit,
that we may hear and rejoice
in the Gospel of our Savior,
Jesus Christ, the Light of the world.
Amen.

FIRST LESSON

The service may follow the pattern of Alternative 2. The lighting of the congregation's cand place immediately upon the lighting of the Christ candle or may follow Holy Communion, the c extinguished after the singing of "Silent Night" as the concluding hymn.

Commentary

If Christmas does not fall on a Sunday and a service is to be held on Christmas Day, it is a to use the same pattern as for the Christmas Eve second service, omitting the ligh congregation's candles. Use the prayer texts that do not mention "holy night." If Christr Sunday, December 25, and the Christmas lessons have been used the preceding ev Christmas Eve service, either of the following sets of lessons may be used:

FIRST LESSON	Isaiah 62:6-7, 10-12
PSALM	Psalm 97
SECOND LESSON	Titus 3:4-7
GOSPEL	Luke 2:8-20

or

FIRST LESSON	Isaiah 52:7-10
PSALM	Psalm 98
SECOND LESSON	Hebrews 1:1-12
GOSPEL	John 1:1-14

In addition to plans for the environment and for visuals mentioned earlier, the use of c processions or in specific congregational actions should be considered. A simple m

adoration, with sensitivity to the space, might well highlight a Christmas crèche. Specific symbols on the Chrismon or Jesse Tree may be used in the dance or on the dancers' garments. Colors of white, yellow, and gold in fine textures are appropriate for the vestments and garments as well.

In planning music for these services, care should be taken to use a variety of instruments and musicians. Try not to do everything in a single service, but allow a cumulative unfolding of many gifts throughout these days. If both early and late evening Christmas Eve services are celebrated, design the music (choral, instrumental, and congregational) with the particular gatherings and themes of the lessons in mind. If large numbers of families with children are to be present, music suitable for children should be encouraged.

The Sundays After Christmas

There are either one or two Sundays after Christmas and before Epiphany. The First Sunday After Christmas falls between December 26 and January 1 inclusive. The Second Sunday After Christmas, if it occurs, falls between January 2 and 5 inclusive. During the entire Christmas Season, Christmas visuals should remain in place, and Christmas carols and other Christmas music are appropriate. The lessons and psalms are as follows:

FIRST LESSON

First Sunday	Isaiah 63:7-9	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Isaiah 61:10–62:3	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	I Samuel 2:18-20, 26	(Year C: 1/1/1995, 1997, 2000)
Second Sunday	Jeremiah 31:7-14 *or* Sirach 24:1-12	(All years)

PSALM

First Sunday	Psalm 148	(All years)
Second Sunday	Psalm 147:12-20 *or* Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21	(All years)

SECOND LESSON

First Sunday	Hebrews 2:10-18	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Galatians 4:4-7	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Colossians 3:12-17	(Year C: 1/1/1995, 1997, 2000)
Second Sunday	Ephesians 1:3-14	(All years)

GOSPEL

First Sunday	Matthew 2:13-23	(Year A: 1995, 1998, 2001)
	Luke 2:22-40	(Year B: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Luke 2:41-52	(Year C: 1/1/1995, 1997, 2000)
Second Sunday	John 1:(1-9) 10-18	(All years)

There are other options on these Sundays. January 1 or the nearest Sunday may be observed as New Year's, using New Year's lessons and resources (see next section, "John Wesley's Covenant

ACT OF PRAISE

Here may be sung the Gloria in Excelsis, or *the* Te Deum, or *another canticle of praise.*

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 60:1-6 (All years)

PSALM Psalm 72:1-14 (All years)

SECOND LESSON Ephesians 3:1-12 (All years)

ALLELUIA, HYMN, or ANTHEM

GOSPEL Matthew 2:1-12 (All years)

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS

Here may be offered a bidding prayer, or pastoral prayer, followed by petitions from the congregation with the people responding, **Lord of light, hear our prayer.**

or

Let us pray for the church and for the world.
Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.
Silence.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.
Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.
Silence.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.
Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.
Silence.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.
Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.
Silence.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE AND PEACE

Christ invites to this table all who confess faith in his promises and who intend to live as reconciled people. Let us, as God's forgiven and accepted people, exchange signs of peace and reconciliation with one another.
The peace of our Lord Christ be with you all.
And also with you.
Exchange signs of peace.

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 42:1-9	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Genesis 1:1-5	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Isaiah 43:1-7	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

PSALM Psalm 29 (All years)

SECOND LESSON

Acts 10:34-43	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Acts 19:1-7	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Acts 8:14-17	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

ALLELUIA (HYMN OR ANTHEM)

GOSPEL

Matthew 3:13-17	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Mark 1:4-11	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

SERMON

SERVICE OF BAPTISM AND/OR BAPTISMAL REAFFIRMATION

THE PRAYERS

If specific petitions are offered, the people may respond: **Hear us in your mercy, Lord,** *or* **To you be thanks and praise,** *to supplications and thanksgiving, respectively.*

PEACE

The peace may be initiated by the newly baptized, confirmed, or those making special reaffirmations.
The peace of Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

OFFERING

A hymn may be sung as the table is prepared, such as "Christian People, Raise Your Song," "How Good to Offer Thanks," "We Give Thee But Thine Own," or "I Come with Joy unto the Lord."

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The text is the same as for Epiphany, found on pp. 86-88.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING THE BREAD

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (between January 14 and 20 inclusive)

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11; I Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42
"Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult" (John)
"Just As I Am, Without One Plea" (John)
"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"
"We Would See Jesus" (John)
Any musical setting of the *Agnus Dei* ("Lamb of God") (John)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

I Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18; I Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51
"Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult" (John)
"We Would See Jesus" (esp. v. 5) (John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; I Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11
"Christ, from Whom All Blessings Flow" (I Cor.)
"Many Gifts, One Spirit" (I Cor.)
"One Bread, One Body" (I Cor.)
"As Man and Woman We Were Made" (John)

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (between January 21 and 27 inclusive)

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

"Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9; I Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23
"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light" (Isa.; Ps.)
"Blest Be the Tie that Binds" (I Cor.)
"Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; I Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20
"Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult" (Mark)
"Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; I Corinthians 12:12-31*a*; Luke 4:14-21
"Let's Sing unto the Lord" (Ps.)
"Christ, from Whom All Blessings Flow" (I Cor.)
"One Bread, One Body" (I Cor.)
"Hail to the Lord's Anointed" (Luke)

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (between January 28 and February 3 inclusive)
If it is the Last Sunday After Epiphany, see Transfiguration.

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Micah 6:1-8; Psalm 15; I Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12
"What Does the Lord Require" (Mic.)
"The Old Rugged Cross"
"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (I Cor.)
"Lord, I Want to Be a Christian" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; I Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28
"Lord, Speak to Me" (Deut.)
"I Want a Principle Within" (Ps.)
"Silence, Frenzied, Unclean Spirit" *or* any hymn on healing (Mark)
"O Young and Fearless Prophet" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; I Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30
"Are Ye Able" (Jer.)
"Saranam, Saranam" (Ps.)
"Morning Glory, Starlit Sky" (I Cor.)
"The Gift of Love" (I Cor.)
"We'll Understand It Better By and By" (I Cor. 13:12)

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (between February 4 and 10 inclusive)
If it is the Last Sunday After Epiphany, see Transfiguration.

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Isaiah 58:3-9*a* (9*b*-12); Psalm 112:1-9 (10); I Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16); Matthew 5:13-20
"Hope of the World" (Isa.; Ps.)
"Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know" (I Cor.)
"This Little Light of Mine" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11; I Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39
"All Earth Is Waiting" (Isa.)
"Come, Ye Disconsolate" *or* any hymn on healing (Isa.; Ps.; Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13); Psalm 138; I Corinthians 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11
"Here I Am, Lord" (Isa.)
"Holy, Holy, Holy" (Isa.)
"Send Me, Lord" (Isa.)
"The Voice of God Is Calling" (Isa.)
"Whom Shall I Send" (Isa.)
"Amazing Grace" (I Cor.)
"Christ Is Risen" (I Cor.)
"Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore" (Luke)

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (between February 11 and 17 inclusive)
If it is the Last Sunday After Epiphany, see Transfiguration.

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Deuteronomy 30:5-12 *or* Sirach 15:15-20; Psalm 119:1-8; I Corinthians 3:1-9; Matthew 5:21-37
"Trust and Obey" (Deut.; Matt.)
"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" (Ps.)
"Dear Jesus, in Whose Life I See" (Matt.)
"I Want a Principle Within" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

II Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30; I Corinthians 9:24-27; Mark 1:40-45
"There Is a Balm in Gilead" *or* any hymn on healing (II Kings; Mark)
"He Touched Me" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Jeremiah 17:5-10; Psalm 1; I Corinthians 15:12-20; Luke 6:17-26
"I Shall Not Be Moved" (Jer.; Ps.)
"Christ Is Risen" (I Cor.)
"Sing with All the Saints in Glory" (I Cor.)
"O Young and Fearless Prophet" (Luke)
"Are Ye Able" (Luke)

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (between February 18 and 24 inclusive)
If it is the Last Sunday After Epiphany, see Transfiguration.

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18; Psalm 119:33-40; I Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23; Matthew 5:38-48
"Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation" (I Cor.)
"Lord, I Want to Be a Christian" (Lev.; Matt.)
"O Love, How Deep, How Broad" (Lev.; Matt.)
"O Young and Fearless Prophet" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Isaiah 43:18-25; Psalm 41; II Corinthians 1:18-22; Mark 2:1-12
"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" (Isa.; Ps.)
"Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know" (I Cor.)
"The Old Rugged Cross" (I Cor.)
"Come, Ye Disconsolate" (Mark)
"Heal Me, Hands of Jesus" (Mark)
"When Jesus the Healer Passed through Galilee" (Mark)
"Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Genesis 45:3-11, 15; Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40; I Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50; Luke 6:27-38
"Depth of Mercy" (Gen.)
"God Will Take Care of You" (Ps.)
"Sing with All the Sons of Glory" (I Cor.)
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (Luke)

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (between February 25 and 29 inclusive)

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Isaiah 49:8-16*a*; Psalm 131; I Corinthians 4:1-5; Matthew 6:24-34
"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light" (I Cor.)
"O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee" (Matt.)
"Seek Ye First" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Hosea 2:14-20; Psalm 103:1-13, 22; II Corinthians 3:1-6; Mark 2:13-22
"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" (Hos.)
"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" (Ps.)
"Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven" (Ps.)
"Spirit of the Living God" (I Cor.)
"Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Isaiah 55:10-13 *or* Sirach 27:4-7; Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15; I Corinthians 15:51-58; Luke 6:39-49
"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" (Isa.; Ps.)
"O Happy Day" (Isa.; Ps.)
"My Lord, What a Morning" (I Cor.)
"If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee" (Luke)
"My Hope Is Built" (Luke)

J. Transfiguration (Last Sunday After Epiphany)

Having come through several Sundays whose primary color is green, we now celebrate Transfiguration—with its vision of Christ and the prophetic figures on the mountaintop. The color is white, and the visual environment should reflect the blaze of glory. The shining figures of the patriarchs and prophets suggest bold images. See also the commentary that follows the order of worship.

GATHERING

GREETING

The Lord is Sovereign; let the people tremble in awe.
God is enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth shake.
The Lord is great in Zion, and is high above all peoples.
Proclaim the greatness of the Lord our God, and worship God upon the holy mountain.

HYMN

Appropriate hymns include:
"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"
"Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation"
"Christ upon the Mountain Peak" ("Jesus on the Mountain Peak")
"Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"
"Fairest Lord Jesus"
"O Wondrous Sight! O Vision Fair"
"Swiftly Pass the Clouds of Glory"

If the hymn is processional, the greeting may follow. Banners, a book with a brilliant cover, and a processional cross may be used.

OPENING PRAYER

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray: *A brief silence.*

O God, who before the passion of your only begotten Son
revealed his glory upon the holy mountain:
Grant to us that we, beholding by faith the light of his countenance,
may be strengthened to bear our cross,
and be changed into his likeness from glory to glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

or

God of glory and mercy,
before his death in shame
your Son went to the mountaintop
and you revealed his life in glory.
Where prophets witnessed to him,
you proclaimed him your Son,
but he returned to die among us.
Help us face evil with courage,
knowing that all things, even death,
are subject to your transforming power.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Exodus 24:12-18	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
II Kings 2:1-12	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Exodus 34:29-35	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

PSALM

Psalm 2 *or* Psalm 99	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Psalm 50:1-6	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Psalm 99	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

Response: **Sing the glory of the Lord forever!**

SECOND LESSON

II Peter 1:16-21	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
II Corinthians 4:3-6	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
II Corinthians 3:12–4:2	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

HYMN, ANTHEM, or CANTICLE

GOSPEL

Matthew 17:1-9	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Mark 9:2-9	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

SERMON

PRAYERS

The presiding minister may offer prayers and invite the petitions of the congregation, after each of which all may respond: **Christ in glory, hear our prayer** *or* **Look upon us in mercy, Lord.**

or

Gracious God, we pray for your holy church;
That we all may be one.
Grant that every member of the church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your name may be glorified by all people.
We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
That there may be justice and transforming peace on the earth.
Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.
Have compassion on those who suffer this day from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.
Give to the departed eternal rest;
Let perpetual light shine upon them.
We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.
Let us pray for our own needs:
Silence. (BCP)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

If Holy Communion is celebrated, this prayer follows the Great Thanksgiving; if not, the service concludes with offering, hymn, and dismissal with blessing.

THE PEACE

If Holy Communion is celebrated, the following invitation is given before the peace is exchanged:

Christ invites to this table all who confess their faith in him, and who intend to lead a life of love, witness, and faithful service, seeking reconciliation, justice, and peace.
The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

All exchange signs of peace and reconciliation.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray: *A brief silence.*
Most Holy God,
your Son came to save sinners;
we come to this season of repentance,
confessing our unworthiness,
asking for new and honest hearts,
and the healing power of your forgiveness.
Grant this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

or

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing you have made
and forgive the sins of all who are penitent:
Create and make in us new and contrite hearts,
that we, worthily lamenting our sins
and acknowledging our wretchedness,
may obtain of you, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

HYMN "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days," tune: ST. FLAVIAN or other CM.

Lord, who throughout these forty days,
For us didst fast and pray,
Teach us with thee to mourn our sins,
And close by thee to stay.

As thou with Satan didst contend,
And didst the vict'ry win,
O giv us strength in thee to fight,
In thee to conquer sin.

And through these days of penitence,
And through thy passiontide,
Yea, evermore, in life and death,
Jesus! with us abide.

Abide with us, that so, this life
Of suffering overpast,
An Easter of unending joy
We may attain at last! *Amen.*

FIRST LESSON Joel 2:1-2, 12-17*a* (All years)

PSALM 51:1-12

A hymn or anthem that paraphrases portions of this psalm, such as "O for a Heart to Praise My God" *(tune:* AMAZING GRACE*) or* "Create in Me a Clean Heart," *may be sung.*

SECOND LESSON II Corinthians 5:20*b*–6:2 (3-10) (All years)

RESPONSE

Cry, and God will answer.

Call, and the Lord will say: "I am here."

If you do away with the yoke,
the clenched fist, the wicked word;
if you give your bread to the hungry,
and relief to the oppressed;

Call, and the Lord will say: "I am here."

Your light will rise in the darkness
and your shadows become like noon.
The Lord will always guide you,
giving you relief in desert places.

Cry, and God will answer.
Call, and the Lord will say: "I am here."

GOSPEL Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 (All years)

SERMON

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

The following or similar words may be spoken:
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: Christians have always observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection. It became the custom of the church to prepare for Easter by a season of penitence, fasting, and prayer. This season of forty days provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for baptism into the body of Christ. It is also the time when persons who had committed serious sins and had been separated from the community of faith were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the church. The whole congregation is thus reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our baptismal faith.

I invite you, in the name of the Lord, to observe a holy Lent, by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving; and by reading and meditating on the Word of God. To make a right beginning, and as a mark of our mortality, let us now kneel (bow) before our Creator and Redeemer.

A brief silence is kept.

THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray:
Almighty God,
you have created us out of the dust of the earth;

celebration of Holy Communion, these should always be separated, with the people coming forward for each particular action.

When a final hymn or other sung response is used, it may be sung before the dismissal with blessing while the ministers remain facing the congregation. The choir and ministers may then recess in silence with the cross going before them. The people depart in silence.

C. The Sundays in Lent

On the Sundays in Lent, there is a healthy tension between two facts: it is Lent, and it is the Lord's Day. It is important that we keep an appropriate balance in our worship on these Sundays.

On the one hand, these Sundays must be the heart of our congregational observance of Lent. In most local churches there are many more persons present on these Sundays than there are at any weekday service, even Ash Wednesday or the weekdays in Holy Week. Many, if not most, of the regular worshipers will not participate in congregational worship except on Sunday.

On the other hand, even in Lent every Sunday is a little Easter—a celebration of the resurrection. We noted earlier that Lent actually has forty-six days because the six Sundays in Lent are not counted as part of the forty days of Lent. The traditional usage that speaks of "Sundays *in* Lent" reminds us that the Lord's Day is "in but not of" the penitential Lenten Season.

One way to achieve balance and wholeness in the observance of Lent is to encourage attendance at weekly Lenten renewal meetings in addition to Sunday services. Since Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, many congregations hold such meetings on the Wednesdays following. These meetings with their emphasis on spiritual formation—including study, prayer, reflection, and action—help at least a nucleus of the congregation supplement what is possible in Sunday worship as they prepare to renew their baptismal covenant. If persons are to be baptized or confirmed at Easter, it is, of course, essential that there be classes or sessions in addition to Sunday worship at which they or (in the case of young children) their parents can be thoroughly prepared.

But it is also important that the Sunday services in this season have a balance of Lent and Lord's Day which enables the congregation as a whole to prepare for the renewal that is the focus of Easter. It is not enough that these Sundays be like other Sundays, glorious as any Lord's Day; they must be focused on the spiritual deepening that is essential if we are to be ready to celebrate the Paschal Mystery. Neither is it enough to treat these Sundays as if Lent were simply one long Holy Week, concentrating on the suffering and death of Christ, as if we could ignore for even a single Lord's Day the fact of the risen, living Christ in our midst.

The environment of worship should suggest this balance. The visual suggestions made in connection with Ash Wednesday (p. 115) apply to Lent in general, but if the effect produced on Ash Wednesday was extremely somber it may be moderated thereafter.

The lectionary readings are crucial in focusing our worship rightly on these Lenten Sundays, and they will be reliable guides to the selection of prayers and hymns. Even if we note the Lenten Season by the traditional omission of hymns and responses with "alleluia," this does not mean that we should sing passion hymns all through Lent. Some hymns related to the lessons are also listed.

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Psalm 32; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11
"Amazing Grace" or "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (Rom.)
"Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" (Matt.) (see p. 111)

"O Love, How Deep" *or* "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; I Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15
"Great Is Thy Faithfulness" (Gen.)
"Thy Holy Wings, O Savior" (Gen.; I Pet.)
" 'Tis the Old Ship of Zion" (Gen.; I Pet.)
"What Wondrous Love Is This" (Ps.; I Pet.)
"When Jesus Came to Jordan" (Mark)
The hymns related to Matthew 4:1-11 above also relate to Mark 1:9-15.

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8*b*-13; Luke 4:1-13
"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah" (Deut.)
"Jesus, Lover of My Soul" *or* "On Eagle's Wings" (Ps.)
"At the Name of Jesus" (Rom.)
"I Love to Tell the Story" (Rom.)
The hymns related to Matthew 4:1-11 above also relate to Luke 4:1-13.

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Genesis 12:1-4*a*; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17 *or* Matthew 17:1-9
"If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee" (Gen.; Rom.)
"The God of Abraham Praise" ("Praise to the Living God") (Gen.; Rom.)
"Where He Leads Me, I Will Follow" (Gen.; Rom.)
"My Faith Looks Up to Thee" (Rom.)
"Spirit of Faith, Come Down" (Rom.)
"How Firm a Foundation" (Rom.; John)
"I Know Whom I Have Believed" (Rom.; John)
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (John)
"This Is a Day of New Beginnings" (John)
"Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters" (John)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38 *or* Mark 9:2-9
"Standing on the Promises" (Gen.; Rom.)
"Make Me a Captive, Lord" (Gen.; Rom.; Mark 8:31-38)
"Where He Leads Me, I Will Follow" (Gen.; Rom.; Mark 8:31-38)
"Are Ye Able" (Mark 8:31-38)
"Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken" (Mark 8:31-38)
"Take Up Thy Cross" (Mark 8:31-38)
For hymns related to Mark 9:1-9, see Transfiguration Sunday.

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17–4:1; Luke 13:31-35 *or* Luke 9:28-36
"If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee" (Gen.)
"The God of Abraham Praise" ("Praise to the Living God") (Gen.)
"On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand" (Phil.)
"Soldiers of Christ, Arise" (Phil.)
"Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life" (Luke 13:31-35)
For hymns related to Luke 9:28-36, see Transfiguration Sunday.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42
"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" (Exod.)
"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me" (Exod.; Rom.)
"Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed" (Rom.)
"And Can It Be that I Should Gain" (Rom.)
"How Great Thou Art" (esp. v. 3) (Rom.)
"What Wondrous Love Is This" (Rom.)
"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (Rom.)
"Fill My Cup, Lord" (John)
"Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" (esp. v. 3) (John)
"Hope of the World" (John)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Exodus 20:1-17; Psalm 19; I Corinthians 1:18-25; John 2:13-22
"The God of Abraham Praise" ("Praise to the Living God") (Exod.; Ps.)
"Trust and Obey" (Exod.; Ps.)
"Let's Sing unto the Lord" (Ps.)
"Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know" (I Cor.)
"The Old Rugged Cross" (I Cor.)
"O Young and Fearless Prophet" (John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8; I Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9
"Come, All of You" (Isa.)
"A Charge to Keep I Have" (I Cor.; Luke)
"My Soul, Be on Thy Guard" (I Cor.; Luke)
"Come, Every Soul by Sin Oppressed" (Luke)

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

I Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41
"Hail to the Lord's Anointed" (I Sam.)
"He Leadeth Me" (I Sam.; Ps.)
"The King of Love My Shepherd Is" (Ps.)
"The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want" (Ps.)
"Awake, O Sleeper" (Eph.)
"Amazing Grace" (John)
"Christ Is the World's Light" (John)
"O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" (esp. v. 6) (John)
"Open My Eyes That I May See" (John)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21
"Amazing Grace" *or* "Freely, Freely" (Eph.; John)
"How Great Thou Art" (esp. v. 3) *or* "Let Us Plead for Faith Alone" (Eph.; John)
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (John)
"This Is a Day of New Beginnings" (John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32; II Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11*b*-32
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" *or* "O Come and Dwell in Me" (II Cor.)
"Come Back Quickly to the Lord" (Luke)
"Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy" (Luke)
"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me" (Luke)
"Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" (Luke)
"Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling" (Luke)
"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" (Luke)

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45
"Breathe on Me, Breath of God" *or* "O Spirit of the Living God" (Ezek.)
"Great Spirit, Now I Pray" (Rom.)
"Spirit of Faith, Come Down" (Rom.)
"Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart" (Rom.)
"O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" (esp. v. 5) (Rom.; John)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12 *or* Psalm 119:9-16; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33
"Give Me a Clean Heart" (Jer.; Ps.)
"Lord, I Want to Be a Christian" (Jer.; Ps.)
"O for a Heart to Praise My God" (Jer.; Ps.)
"Thy Holy Wings, O Savior" (Ps.)
"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (Heb.)
"What Wondrous Love Is This" (Heb.; John)
"O Jesus, I Have Promised" (John)
"We Would See Jesus" (John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3:4*b*-14; John 12:1-8
"Come, All of You" (Isa.; Ps.)
"Walk On, People of God" (Isa.; Ps.; Phil.)
"Many Gifts, One Spirit" (Isa.; Phil.)
"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (Phil.)
"Woman in the Night" (esp. v. 4) (John)

The First Sunday in Lent is of special significance because it is for a great many people the first service of the Lenten Season. Many congregations do not hold Ash Wednesday services, and they need on this Sunday to hear, and respond to, the Ash Wednesday call to repentance and discipline. In congregations in which Ash Wednesday services have been held, the call needs to be repeated on this Sunday clearly enough to be heard by those who did not come on Ash Wednesday, yet subtly enough not to be redundant for those who did.

On this Sunday in all three years, the accounts of Jesus' victory over temptation after forty days in the wilderness point to these themes. In congregations in which persons will present themselves for baptism at Easter, these candidates may be elected or enrolled. This emphasizes the baptismal

and grant that we who bear them
may always acclaim Jesus Messiah
by walking the way of his suffering and cross;
that, dying and rising with him,
we may enter into your kingdom.
Through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

PROCLAMATION OF THE ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM

Here is read the Gospel narrative appointed for the year and Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 (all years), after which the response is said or sung by all, and the procession begins.

Matthew 21:1-11	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Mark 11:1-11	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Luke 19:28-40	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest!

PROCESSIONAL HYMN "All Glory, Laud, and Honor"
"Filled with Excitement"
"Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"
"Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart"
"Tell Me the Stories of Jesus"
"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"

Service of the Passion

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION *Congregation remains standing.*

God our Redeemer,
you sent your Son to be born of a woman
and to die for us on a cross;
By your Holy Spirit, illumine our lives with your Word
so, as the Scripture is read and proclaimed this day,
we may be reconciled and won wholly to your will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 50:4-9*a* (All years)

PSALM Psalm 31:9-16 (All years)

SECOND LESSON Philippians 2:5-11 (All years)

A PASSION HYMN

PROCLAMATION OF THE PASSION STORY

Matthew 26:14–27:66 *or* Matthew 27:11-54	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Mark 14:1–15:47 *or* Mark 15:1-39 (40-47)	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Luke 22:14–23:56 *or* Luke 23:1-49	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

[SERMON] *See commentary for various modes of proclamation with detailed suggestions.*

Responses and Offerings

CONCERNS AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE PEACE

OFFERING

When Holy Communion is not celebrated, the service concludes with a prayer of thanksgiving, the Lord's Prayer, hymn, and dismissal with blessing.

Thanksgiving and Communion

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

In infinite love you made us for yourself;
and when we had fallen into sin
and become subject to evil and death,
your love remained steadfast.
You bid your faithful people cleanse their hearts
and prepare with joy for the Paschal feast;
that, fervent in prayer and works of mercy
and renewed by your Word and sacraments
we may come to the fullness of grace
which you have prepared for those who love you.

And so, with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

and rehearsal are essential, as is wise choice in the level of difficulty of the music. It is better to offer something simple that is done well than something beyond the capacity of the choir.

4. Another possibility is a lessons-and-hymns pattern similar to the lessons and carols that many churches use at Christmastime for special services. Here are some suggestions for the three yearly cycles of readings:

Year A:
Isaiah 50:4-9*a*
Sung Psalter (Ps. 31:9-16) or anthem
Philippians 2:5-11
Hymn: "All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine"
or "At the Name of Jesus"
or "Creator of the Stars of Night"
Matthew 26:14-29
Hymn: "According to Thy Gracious Word"
or "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee"
or "Are Ye Able"
Matthew 26:30-56
Hymn: "In the Hour of Trial"
or "'Tis Midnight, and on Olive's Brow"
or "Go to Dark Gethsemane"
Matthew 26:57-75
Hymn: "Sinners, Turn: Why Will You Die"
or "Ah, Holy Jesus"
or "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"
Matthew 27:1-23
Hymn: "Sinners, Turn: Why Will You Die"
or "There Is a Green Hill Far Away"
or "Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed"
or "Cross of Jesus, Cross of Sorrow"
or "What Wondrous Love Is This"
Matthew 27:24-50
Hymn: "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"
or "O Love Divine, What Hast Thou Done"
or "'Tis Finished! The Messiah Dies"
Matthew 27:51-66
Hymn: "Behold the Savior of Mankind"
or "Never Further Than Thy Cross"
or "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

Year B:
Isaiah 50:4-9*a*
Sung Psalter (Ps. 31:9-16) or anthem
Philippians 2:5-11
Hymn: "All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine"
or "At the Name of Jesus"
or "Take the Name of Jesus with You"
Mark 14:1-25
Hymn: "According to Thy Gracious Word"
or "Are Ye Able"
or "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee"

Mark 14:26-50
Hymn: "In the Hour of Trial"
or " 'Tis Midnight, and on Olive's Brow"
or "Go to Dark Gethsemane"
Mark 14:53-72
Hymn: "Sinners, Turn: Why Will You Die"
or "Ah, Holy Jesus"
or "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"
Mark 15:1-15
Hymn: "Sinners, Turn: Why Will You Die"
or "There Is a Green Hill Far Away"
or "Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed"
or "Cross of Jesus, Cross of Sorrow"
or "What Wondrous Love Is This"
Mark 15:16-39
Hymn: "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"
or "O Love Divine, What Hast Thou Done"
or "'Tis Finished! The Messiah Dies"
Mark 15:40-47
Hymn: "Behold the Savior of Mankind"
or "Never Further Than Thy Cross"
or "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

Year C:
Isaiah 50:4-9*a*
Sung Psalter (Ps. 31:9-16) or anthem
Philippians 2:5-11
Hymn: "All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine"
or "At the Name of Jesus"
or "Creator of the Stars of Night"
Luke 22:14-30 or 14-23
Hymn: "According to Thy Gracious Word"
or "Are Ye Able"
or "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee"
Luke 22:31-62 or 39-48, 54-62
Hymn: "In the Hour of Trial"
or "'Tis Midnight, and on Olive's Brow"
or "Go to Dark Gethsemane"
Luke 22:63–23:25 or 23:1-5, 13-25
Hymn: "Ah, Holy Jesus"
or "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"
Luke 23:26-43
Hymn: "There Is a Green Hill Far Away"
or "Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed"
or "Beneath the Cross of Jesus"
Luke 23:44-56
Hymn: "'Tis Midnight, and on Olive's Brow"
or "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"
or "Were You There?"

Sps "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."

N And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

A brief pause.

And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe, and said,

Sps "Truly this was the Son of God!"

Short form ends.

N There were also many women there, looking on from afar, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him; among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the sepulchre.

Next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said,

Sps "Sir, we remember how that imposter said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Therefore order the sepulchre to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away, and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first."

N Pilate said to them,

S_6 "You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can."

N So they went and made the sepulchre secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

Year B:..... 1994, 1997, 2000
Full form:..... Mark 14:1–15:47
[Short form:..... Mark 15:1-39]

The symbols in the margin represent the following: N–narrator, ✝–Christ, S–speakers other than Christ (these may be subdivided into male and female individual speakers, indicated by S_1, S_2, S_3, and Sps), C–the crowd.

N It was now two days before the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth, and kill him; for they said,

Sps "Not during the feast, lest there be a tumult of the people."

N And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head. But there were some who said to themselves indignantly,

him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.

Year C:.....1995, 1998, 2001
Full form:.....Luke 22:14–23:56
[Short form:..... Luke 23:1-49]

The symbols in the margin represent the following: N–narrator, †–Christ, S–speakers other than Christ (these may be subdivided into male and female individual speakers, indicated by S_1, S_2, S_3, and Sps), C–the crowd.

N And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them,

† "I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

N And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said,

† "Take this, and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

N And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying,

† "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

N And likewise the cup after supper, saying,

† "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But behold the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. For the Son of man goes as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!"

N And they began to question one another, which of them it was that would do this.
A dispute also arose among them, which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. And he said to them,

† "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For which is the greater, one who sits at table, or one who serves? Is it not the one who sits at table? But I am among you as one who serves.
"You are those who have continued with me in my trials; and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren."

N And he said to him,

S_1 "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death."

N He said,

† "I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day, until you three times deny that you know me."

N And he said to them,

Alternate A

With this form, seven or fourteen candles are used, and the Christ candle. Then, following each section, one or two are extinguished until the eighth reading, at which time the loud noise is made and the Christ candle is hidden or removed. At suitable times, hymns that express the scene just portrayed, or express a response to it, may be sung.

(Year A)	(Year B)	(Year C)
1. Matthew 26:30-46	Mark 14:26-42	Luke 22:39-46
	First candle(s) extinguished.	
2. Matthew 26:47-56	Mark 14:43-50	Luke 22:47-53
	Second candle(s) extinguished.	
3. Matthew 26:57-75	Mark 14:51-72	Luke 22:54-62
	Third candle(s) extinguished.	
4. Matthew 27:1-5	Mark 15:1-5	Luke 22:63-71
	Fourth candle(s) extinguished.	
5. Matthew 27:6-23	Mark 15:6-15	Luke 23:1-12
	Fifth candle(s) extinguished.	
6. Matthew 27:24-31	Mark 15:16-20	Luke 23:13-25
	Sixth candle(s) extinguished.	
7. Matthew 27:32-44	Mark 15:21-32	Luke 23:26-38
	Seventh candle(s) extinguished.	
8. Matthew 27:45-50	Mark 15:33-37	Luke 23:39-46
	Christ candle removed or hidden, and harsh sound.	
9. Matthew 27:51-54	Mark 15:38-39	Luke 23:47-56*a*
	Christ candle returned after a brief silence.	

SONG OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT

Isaiah 53:4-9 [or 4-6]

[HYMN]

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Go in peace. May Jesus Christ, who for our sake became obedient unto death, even death on a cross, keep you and strengthen you this night and for ever. **Amen.**

All depart in quietness, except those beginning the prayer vigil.

Alternate B

In communities where the passion narrative is read on Passion/Palm Sunday and Good Friday, it is wise to use this form of the Tenebrae, which centers in the reading of appropriate psalms. It may be done on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday in Holy Week. During the first set of psalms, seven candles are extinguished at suitable intervals; during the second set of three psalms, seven more candles are extinguished. All other candles and lights are extinguished during the Benedictus (Luke 1:68-79) except for one candle which is hidden, usually behind the

OPENING PRAYER

O God, who for our redemption
gave your only begotten Son
to the death of the cross,
and by his glorious resurrection
delivered us from the power of our enemy:
grant us so to die daily to sin
that we may evermore live with him
in the joy of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

or

God our Father,
by raising Christ your Son,
you conquered the power of death
and opened to us the way of eternal life.
Let our celebration today
raise us up and renew our lives
by the Spirit that is within us.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your Son, who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON

Acts 10:34-43 *or* Jeremiah 31:1-6 (Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Acts 10:34-43 *or* Isaiah 25:6-9 (Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Acts 10:34-43 *or* Isaiah 65:17-25 (Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

PSALM 118:1-2, 14-24 (All years)

Response: **This is the day the Lord has made;**
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures for ever.
Let Israel now proclaim,
"His mercy endures for ever."

Response

The Lord is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation.
There is a sound of exultation and victory
in the tents of the righteous;
"The right hand of the Lord has triumphed!
The right hand of the Lord is exalted!
The right hand of the Lord has triumphed!"

Response

I shall not die, but live,
and declare the word of the Lord.
The Lord has punished me sorely,
but he did not hand me over to death.

Response

Open for me the gates of righteousness;
I will enter them;
I will offer thanks to the Lord.
"This is the gate of the Lord;
he who is righteous may enter."
I will give thanks to you,
for you answered me
and have become my salvation.

Response

The Stone which the builders rejected
has become the chief Cornerstone.
This is the Lord's doing,
and it is marvelous in our eyes.
On this day the Lord has acted;
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Response

SECOND LESSON

Colossians 3:1-4 *or* Acts 10:34-43	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
I Corinthians 15:1-11 *or* Acts 10:34-43	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
I Corinthians 15:19-26 *or* Acts 10:34-43	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

HYMN

GOSPEL

John 20:1-18 *or* Matthew 28:1-10	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
John 20:1-18 *or* Mark 16:1-8	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
John 20:1-18 *or* Luke 24:1-12	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

SERMON

RESPONSES TO THE WORD

REAFFIRMATION OF THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

See Annotated Bibliography for listing of denominational liturgies of baptism and reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant.

congregation to hold baptisms and confirmations and receive new members at an Easter Vigil or on Easter Day, then rather than having these rites on Passion/Palm Sunday or during Holy Week, it is much better that they be at some other time in the Great Fifty Days. Pentecost is a good time; but if that is too long to wait, perhaps the Second Sunday of Easter, with its Holy Spirit message, would be suitable. If there are numbers of persons to be baptized, confirmed, or received on that day, then the Sunday after Easter will surely not be "Low Sunday."

It is important that music during these Sundays should be joyous and festive. Hymns and anthems of praise should predominate. To the hymn suggestions given below, it should be added that one can hardly go wrong on these Sundays with a good, beloved hymn of praise and joy in Christ.

Holy Communion on any of these Sundays can be a joyous eucharist (thanksgiving) and a resurrection meal with the living Christ. Churches that celebrate Holy Communion monthly will do so on one or another of these Sundays, and congregations moving toward weekly communion might offer the opportunity of weekly communion in this season even if they are not prepared to do so the rest of the year. The Great Thanksgiving text for the Easter Vigil is suitable for these Sundays as well.

An Opening Prayer for Use in the Easter Season

Lord of Life, by submitting to death you conquered the grave.
By being lifted on a cross you draw all peoples to you.
By being raised from the dead
you restored to humanity all that we had lost through sin.
Throughout these fifty days of Easter
we proclaim the marvelous mystery of your death and resurrection.
For all praise is yours, now and throughout eternity. **Amen.**

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Acts 2:14*a*, 22-32; Psalm 16; I Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31
"The Day of Resurrection" (Acts)
"How Firm a Foundation" (I Pet.)
"O Sons and Daughters, Let Us Sing" (I Pet.; John)
"Breathe on Me, Breath of God" (John)
"Let It Breathe on Me" (John)
"O Breath of Life" (John)
"Spirit of Faith, Come Down" (John)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Acts 4:32-35; Psalm 133; I John 1:1–2:2; John 20:19-31
"All Praise to Our Redeeming Lord" (Acts)
"Jesus, United by Thy Grace" (Acts)
"Trust and Obey" (I John)
See Year A for hymns related to John 20:19-31.

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Acts 5:27-32; Psalm 118:14-29 *or* Psalm 150; Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31
"This Is the Day" *or* "This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made" (Psalm 118:14-29)
"Crown Him with Many Crowns" (Rev.)
"Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending" (Rev.)
See Year A for hymns related to John 20:19-31.

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Acts 2:14*a*, 36-41; Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; I Peter 1:17-23; Luke 24:13-35
"The Church's One Foundation" (Acts)
"Abide with Me" (Luke)
"O Thou Who This Mysterious Bread" (Luke)
"On the Day of Resurrection" (Luke)
"Thine Be the Glory" (Luke)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Acts 3:12-19; Psalm 4; I John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36*b*-48
"Lead Me, Lord" (Ps.)
"Children of the Heavenly Father" (I John)
"Take Time to Be Holy" (I John)
"Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine" (I John; Luke)
"Go, Make of All Disciples" (Luke)
"See How Great a Flame Aspires" (Luke)
"Thine Be the Glory" (Luke)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Acts 9:1-6 (7-20); Psalm 30; Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19
"And Can It Be That I Should Gain" (Acts)
"Amazing Grace" (Acts)
"Crown Him with Many Crowns" (Rev.)
"See the Morning Sun Ascending" (esp. v. 4) (Rev.)
"This Is the Feast of Victory" (Rev.)
"Lord God, Your Love Has Called Us Here" (John)
"Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore" (John)

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23; I Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10
"Jesus, United by Thy Grace" (Acts)
"Let Us Break Bread Together" (Acts)
"The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want" (Ps.)
"He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought" (Ps.; I Pet.; John)
"O Thou in Whose Presence" (Ps.; I Pet.; John)
"Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" (Ps.; I Pet.; John)
"The King of Love My Shepherd Is" (Ps.; I Pet.; John)
"You Satisfy the Hungry Heart" (Ps.; I Pet.; John)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Acts 4:5-12; Psalm 23; I John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18
"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" (Acts)
"At the Name of Jesus" (Acts)
"Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation" (Acts)
"O for a Heart to Praise My God" (I John)
See Year A for hymns related to Psalm 23 and John 10.

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Acts 9:36-43; Psalm 23; Revelation 7:9-17; John 10:22-30
"Crown Him with Many Crowns" (Rev.)
"Fix Me, Jesus" (Rev.)
"See the Morning Sun Ascending" (esp. v. 4) (Rev.)
"Ye Servants of God" (Rev.)
See Year A for hymns related to Psalm 23 and John 10.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; I Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14
"I'll Praise My Maker While I've Breath" (Acts)
"Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation" (I Pet.)
"The Church's One Foundation" (I Pet.)
"Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life" (John)
"O Jesus, I Have Promised" (John)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; I John 4:7-12; John 15:1-8
"Christ for the World We Sing" (Acts)
"We've a Story to Tell to the Nations" (Acts)
"I Need Thee Every Hour" (I John; John)
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (I John; John)
"Where Charity and Love Prevail" (I John)
"When We Are Living" (John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 148; Revelation 21:1-6; John 13:31-35
"Spirit of the Living God" (Acts)
"Mountains Are All Aglow" (Ps.)
"Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" (Rev.)
"I Want to Be Ready" (Rev.)
"O Holy City, Seen of John" (Rev.)
"On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand" (Rev.)
"Soon and Very Soon" (Rev.)
"This Is a Day of New Beginnings" (Rev.)
"Blest Be the Tie That Binds" (John)
"Jesus, United by Thy Grace" (John)
"They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love" (John)

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999

Acts 17:22-31; Psalm 66:8-20; I Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21
"I Sing the Almighty Power of God" (Acts)
"O Zion, Haste" (Acts)
"Open My Eyes, That I May See" (Acts)
"Let All the World in Every Corner Sing" (Acts; Ps.)
"Thy Holy Wings, O Savior" (I Pet.)
"Come Down, O Love Divine" (John)
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (John)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000

Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; I John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17
"O Spirit of the Living God" (Acts)
"Spirit of Faith, Come Down" (Acts)
"Trust and Obey" (I John)
"Victory in Jesus" (I John)
"Help Us Accept Each Other" (John)
"Jesus Our Friend and Brother" (John)
"What a Friend We Have in Jesus" (John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001

Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67; Revelation 21:10; 21:22–22:5; John 14:23-29 *or* John 5:1-9
"There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" (Acts)
"Christ Is the World's Light" (Rev.)
"For the Healing of the Nations" (Rev.)
"Shall We Gather at the River" (Rev.)
"Blessed Jesus, at Thy Word" (John 14:23-29)

M. Ascension Day and the Sunday Following

The church has traditionally marked the biblical reality of the ascension of the Lord who now sits at the right hand of the Father with a special feast. This day marks the rightful assumption of glory and power by the Crucified One. While we mark the fortieth day of the Easter Season, or the sixth Thursday, this is not merely a historical commemoration of the forty days of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances to his disciples (Acts 1:3); rather it is a highlighting of an integral part of the Easter event according to the earliest traditions.

In many churches it is not feasible to hold a special service on Thursday, in which case the ascension may be celebrated the following Sunday, the Seventh Sunday of Easter. If this is done, the lessons for Ascension Day should be used, with the reading from Acts perhaps extended to verse 14 or even including verses 15-17 and 21-26.

In any event, the liturgy should make abundantly clear the connection between the resurrection and the ascension: Christ died and rose that we might have eternal life; and he ascended that we might be given a share in his divinity, his continuing presence and, hence, life with God. A careful study of all the lessons of this season leading up to the ascension texts is essential to any planning. This biblical understanding will help avoid a shallow interpretation of the ascension.

GATHERING

GREETING

Risen with Christ, let us seek the realities of the Spirit.

Our life is hidden with Christ in God.

He who descended
is also ascended far above the heavens,
that he might fill all things.

When Christ, our Life, appears,
we shall appear with him in glory! Alleluia!

HYMN OF PRAISE *Suitable hymns for this day include:*

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"
"All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine"
"Christ Is the World's Light"
"Crown Him with Many Crowns"
"Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus"
"Jesus Shall Reign"
"Rejoice, the Lord Is King"
"The Head That Once Was Crowned"

OPENING PRAYER

The risen Christ is with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray:
Almighty God,
whose blessed Son our Savior
ascended far above all heavens
that he might fill all things:
mercifully grant us faith
to recognize his abiding presence
with his people on earth,
even to the end of the ages;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, in glory for ever.

Amen.

or

Ever-loving God,
your only Son was taken up into heaven
that he might prepare a place for us
and bestow the Spirit of Truth.
Make us joyful in his ascension
so that we might worship him in his glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Illumine our hearts and minds
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
that the Scriptures may be the living Word to us this day;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Ascension Day:	Acts 1:1-11	(All years)
Seventh Sunday:	Acts 1:6-14	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Acts 1:15-17, 21-26	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
	Acts 16:16-34	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

PSALM

Ascension Day:	Psalm 47 *or* Psalm 110	(All years)
Seventh Sunday:	Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	Psalm 1	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
	Psalm 97	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

SECOND LESSON

Ascension Day:	Ephesians 1:15-23	(All years)
Seventh Sunday:	I Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	I John 5:9-13	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
	Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

HYMN

GOSPEL

Ascension Day:	Luke 24:44-53	(All years)
Seventh Sunday:	John 17:1-11	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
	John 17:6-19	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
	John 17:20-26	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

SERMON

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE OR PASTORAL PRAYER

To each petition responding: **King of Glory, hear our prayer.**

THE PEACE

OFFERING

If Holy Communion is celebrated, the Great Thanksgiving for the Easter Vigil and the dismissal with blessing given below may be used.

If Holy Communion is not celebrated, the service may conclude with the following prayers, a hymn, and the dismissal with blessing.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Blessed are you,
God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
By your mercy we have been born anew to a living hope.

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God,
on this day you opened the way of eternal life
to every race and nation
by the promised gift of your Holy Spirit.
Shed abroad this gift throughout the world
by the preaching of the gospel,
that it may reach to the ends of the earth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever.

Amen.

or

Spirit of the living God,
visit us again on the day of Pentecost.

Come, Holy Spirit.

With rushing wind that sweeps away all barriers,

Come, Holy Spirit.

With tongues of fire that set our hearts aflame,

Come, Holy Spirit.

With speech that unites the Babel of our tongues,

Come, Holy Spirit.

With love that overleaps the boundaries of race and nations,

Come, Holy Spirit.

With power from above to make our weakness strong,

Come, Holy Spirit.

In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Acts 2:1-21 *or*	(All years)
Numbers 11:24-30	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Ezekiel 37:1-14	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Genesis 11:1-9	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

PSALM 104:24-34 (All years)

Response:

Send forth your Spirit,
and renew the face of the earth.

O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
Yonder is the great and wide sea
with its living things too many to number,
creatures both small and great.
There move the ships,
and there is that Leviathan,
which you have made for the sport of it.

Response

All creatures look to you
to give them their food in due season.
You give it to them; they gather it;
you open your hand,
and they are filled with good things.
You hide your face, and they are terrified;
you take away their breath,
and they die and return to their dust.
You send forth your Spirit,
and they are created;
and so you renew the face of the earth.

Response

May the glory of the Lord endure for ever;
may the Lord rejoice in all his works.
He looks at the earth and it trembles;
he touches the mountains and they smoke.

Response

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God as long as I have being.
May my meditation be pleasing to him,
for I rejoice in the Lord.

Response

SECOND LESSON

If Acts 2:1-21 was not used as the first lesson it should be used as the second lesson; otherwise, the lessons are as follows:

I Corinthians 12:3*b*-13	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Romans 8:22-27	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Romans 8:14-17	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

HYMN OR RESPONSORY

The alternate litany of praise from the opening of the service may be used.

GOSPEL

John 20:19-23 *or* John 7:37-39	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
John 15:26-27; 16:4*b*-15	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
John 14:8-17 (25-27)	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

SERMON

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

[BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION, AND RENEWAL OF THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT]

See Annotated Bibliography for listing of denominational liturgies of baptism, confirmation, and renewal of the baptismal covenant.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE PEACE

Jesus said: "My peace I give to you, not as the world gives."
The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us exchange signs of reconciliation and peace.

OFFERING

If Holy Communion is not celebrated, the service concludes with the following prayers, the final hymn, and the dismissal with blessing.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God of wind, word, and fire,
we bless your name this day for sending
the light and strength of your Holy Spirit.
We give you thanks for all the gifts, great and small,
which have been poured out upon your children.
Accept us with our gifts to be living praise and witness
to your love throughout all the earth;
through Jesus Christ who lives with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever.

Amen.

addition to those congregations that celebrate Holy Communion every Sunday, congregations that celebrate Holy Communion on the first Sunday of every month will do so on Trinity Sunday when it falls on the first Sunday in June. The Great Thanksgiving printed below, while it is suitable for use at any time of the year, is by its thoroughly trinitarian character well suited for Trinity Sunday.

GATHERING *Instrumental music should express adoration.*

GREETING

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE *Suitable hymns for this day include*

"Holy, Holy, Holy!"
"Come, Thou Almighty King"
"Ancient of Days"
"Holy God, We Praise Thy Name"
"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" ("The Doxology")
"Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost"
"We Believe in One True God"
"Thou, Whose Almighty Word"

OPENING PRAYER

Father, you sent your Word to bring us truth
and your Spirit to make us holy.
Through them we come to know
the mystery of your life.
Help us to worship you, one God in three persons,
by proclaiming and living our faith in you.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON

Deuteronomy 4:32-40	(Year A: 1987, 1990, 1993)
Isaiah 6:1-8	(Year B: 1988, 1991, 1994)
Proverbs 8:22-31	(Year C: 1989, 1992, 1995)

PSALM

Psalm 33:1-12	(Year A: 1987, 1990, 1993)
Psalm 29	(Year B: 1988, 1991, 1994)
Psalm 8	(Year C: 1989, 1992, 1995)

SECOND LESSON

II Corinthians 13:5-14	(Year A: 1987, 1990, 1993)
Romans 8:12-17	(Year B: 1988, 1991, 1994)
Romans 5:1-5	(Year C: 1989, 1992, 1995)

HYMN

GOSPEL

Matthew 28:16-20	(Year A: 1987, 1990, 1993)
John 3:1-17	(Year B: 1988, 1991, 1994)
John 16:12-15	(Year C: 1989, 1992, 1995)

SERMON

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

The Nicene Creed or this abbreviated version of the Athanasian Creed:

Whoever wants to be saved
must, above all, hold the catholic faith:
Now this is the catholic faith,
that we worship one God in three persons
and three persons in one God
without confusing the persons
nor dividing the divine being.
For the Father is one person,
the Son is another,
and the Holy Spirit is still another;
but there is one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
all equal in glory and eternal in majesty.
It is necessary that one also believe faithfully
that our Lord Jesus Christ became human.
For this is the true faith, that we believe and confess,
that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
is both God and human:
God, begotten before all worlds from the being of the Father,
and human, born in the world from the being of his mother,
perfect God and perfect human,
with a rational soul and a human body.
For just as soul and body are one in a human being,
so God and human are one in Christ,
who suffered for our salvation, descended to the dead,
rose from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven,
sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty
and will come to judge the living and the dead.
At whose coming, all shall rise with their bodies
to give account of their own deeds.
Those who have done what is good will enter eternal life.
This is the catholic faith.

challenged to be creative. Green symbolizes growth, and this time can be one of spiritual growth for any church.

If the Sunday between May 24 and 28 inclusive follows Trinity Sunday, use readings for the Eighth Sunday After Epiphany on that day.

SUNDAY BETWEEN MAY 29 AND JUNE 4 INCLUSIVE (if after Trinity Sunday)

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 6:9-22, 7:24, 8:14-19; Psalm 46 *or* Deuteronomy 11:18-21, 26-28; Psalm 31:1-5, 19-24
Romans 1:16-17; 3:22*b*-28 (29-31); Matthew 7:21-29
"If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee" *or* "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
I Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 *or* Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Psalm 81:1-10
II Corinthians 4:5-12; Mark 2:23–3:6
"Lord, Speak to Me" (I Sam.); "This Little Light of Mine" (II Cor.)
Any hymn on the Lord's Day (Deut.; Mark) or on healing (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
I Kings 18:20-21 (22-29) 30-39; Psalm 96 *or* I Kings 8:22-23, 41-43; Psalm 96:1-9
Galatians 1:1-12; Luke 7:1-10
"Rejoice, the Lord Is King" (I Kings; Psalm); any hymn on healing (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN JUNE 5 AND 11 INCLUSIVE (if after Trinity Sunday)

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 12:1-9; Psalm 33:1-12 *or* Hosea 5:15–6:6; Psalm 50:7-15
Romans 4:13-25; Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26
"Where He Leads Me, I Will Follow" (Gen.; Rom.; Matt.)
"Jesus Calls Us O'er the Tumult" (Gen.; Hosea; Rom.; Matt.)
"The Voice of God Is Calling" (Matt.)
"There Is a Balm in Gilead" *or* any hymn on healing (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
I Samuel 8:4-11 (12-15) 16-20 (11:14-15); Psalm 138 *or* Genesis 3:8-15; Psalm 130
II Corinthians 4:13–5:1; Mark 3:20-35
"Stand By Me" (II Cor.; Mark); any hymn on healing (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
I Kings 17:8-16 (17-24); Psalm 146 *or* I Kings 17:17-24; Psalm 30
Galatians 1:11-24; Luke 7:11-17
"Amazing Grace" *or* "And Can It Be That I Should Gain" (Gal.)
"Come, Ye Disconsolate" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN JUNE 12 AND 18 INCLUSIVE (if after Trinity Sunday)

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 18:1-15 (21:1-7); Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 *or* Exodus 19:2-8*a*; Psalm 100
Romans 5:1-8; Matthew 9:35–10:8 (9-23)
"How Great Thou Art" (esp. v. 3) (Rom.)
"Freely, Freely" *or* any hymn on mission or evangelism (Rom.; Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
I Samuel 15:34–16:13; Psalm 20 *or* Ezekiel 17:22-24; Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15
II Corinthians 5:6-10 (11-13), 14-17; Mark 4:26-34
"O Come and Dwell in Me" (II Cor.); "Come, Ye Thankful People Come" (Mark)
"The Kingdom of God Is Like a Grain of Mustard Seed" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
I Kings 21:1-10 (11-14) 15-21*a*; Psalm 5:1-8 *or* II Samuel 11:26–12:10, 13-15; Psalm 32
Galatians 2:15-21; Luke 7:36–8:3
"Thou Hidden Love of God" (Gal.); "Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive" (Luke)
"Freely, Freely," *or* "Just As I Am" *or* "Grace Greater Than Our Sin" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN JUNE 19 AND 25 INCLUSIVE (if after Trinity Sunday)

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 21:8-21; Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17 *or* Jeremiah 20:7-13; Psalm 69:7-10 (11-15) 16-18
Romans 6:1*b*-11; Matthew 10:24-39
"We Know That Christ Is Raised" (Rom.)
"Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus" *or* "How Firm a Foundation" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
I Samuel 17: (1*a*, 4-11, 19-23) 32-49; Psalm 9:9-20
or I Samuel 17:57–18:5, 10-16; Psalm 133 *or* Job 38:1-11; Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32
II Corinthians 6:1-13; Mark 4:35-41
"Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me" *or* "Lonely the Boat" *or* "Stand By Me" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
I Kings 19:1-4 (5-7) 8-15*a*; Psalms 42 and 43 *or* Isaiah 65:1-9; Psalm 22:19-28
Galatians 3:23-29; Luke 8:26-39
"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind" (esp. stanza 5) (I Kings) *or* "One Bread, One Body" (Gal.)
"Christ, from Whom All Blessings Flow" *or* "In Christ There Is No East or West" (Gal.)
"Silence, Frenzied, Unclean Spirit"; "Just As I Am" (esp. v. 3); any hymn on healing (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN JUNE 26 AND JULY 2 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13 *or* Jeremiah 28:5-9; Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18
Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 10:40-42
"Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life" (esp. stanza 4) (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
II Samuel 1:1, 17-27; Psalm 130
or Wisdom of Solomon 1:13-15; 2:23-24; Lamentations 3:23-33 *or* Psalm 30
II Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43
"Great Is Thy Faithfulness" (Lam.) *or* "Ivory Palaces" (II Cor.)
"Heal Us, Emmanuel" (esp. stanza 4) *or* any hymn on healing (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
II Kings 2:1-2, 6-14; Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20 *or* I Kings 19:15-16, 19-21; Psalm 16
Galatians 5:1, 13-25; Luke 9:51-62
"Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart" *or* any hymn on the Holy Spirit (II Kings; Gal.)
"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" (II Kings) *or* "O Jesus, I Have Promised" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN JULY 3 AND 9 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67; Psalm 45:10-17 *or* Song of Solomon 2:8-13
or Zechariah 9:9-12; Psalm 145:8-14
Romans 7:15-25*a*; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
"Dear Jesus, in Whose Life I See" (Rom.)
"Come, All of You" *or* "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
II Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10; Psalm 48 *or* Ezekiel 2:1-5; Psalm 123
II Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13
"Be Thou My Vision" *or* "Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart" (II Cor.; Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
II Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30 *or* Isaiah 66:10-14; Psalm 66:1-9
Galatians 6:(1-6) 7-16; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20
Any hymn of healing (II Kings); "Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know"
or "In the Cross of Christ I Glory" *or* "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (Gal.)

SUNDAY BETWEEN JULY 10 AND 16 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 119:105-112 *or* Isaiah 55:10-13; Psalm 65 (1-8) 9-13
Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
Any hymn on the Holy Spirit (Rom.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
II Samuel 6:1-5, 12*b*-19; Psalm 24 *or* Amos 7:7-15; Psalm 85:8-13
Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:14-29
"Lord of the Dance" (II Sam.); "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates" (Ps.)
"Amazing Grace" *or* "How Great Thou Art" (Eph.)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Amos 7:7-17; Psalm 82 *or* Deuteronomy 30:9-14; Psalm 25:1-10
Colossians 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37
"In Christ There Is No East or West" *or* "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN JULY 17 AND 23 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 28:10-19*a*; Psalm 139:1-2, 23-24
or Wisdom of Solomon 12:13, 16-19 *or* Isaiah 44:6-8; Psalm 86:11-17; Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
"We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder" (Gen.); "Every Time I Feel the Spirit" (Rom.)
"Hope of the World" *or* "My Hope Is Built" *or* any hymn on the Holy Spirit or on hope (Rom.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
II Samuel 7:1-14*a*; Psalm 89:20-37 *or* Jeremiah 23:1-6; Psalm 23
Ephesians 2:11-22; Mark 6:30-34, 53-56
"The Church's One Foundation" *or* "Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation" (Eph.)
"O Thou in Whose Presence" *or* "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" *or* "The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want" *or* "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" (Jer.; Ps.; Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Amos 8:1-12; Psalm 52 *or* Genesis 18:1-10*a*; Psalm 15
Colossians 1:15-28; Luke 10:38-42
"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind" *or* "Take Time to Be Holy" (Col.; Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN JULY 24 AND 30 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 29:15-28; Psalm 105:1-11, 45*b or* Psalm 128 *or* I Kings 3:5-12; Psalm 119:129-136
Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" (Rom.); "Jesus, Priceless Treasure" (Matt.)
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" *or* "The Kingdom of God" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
II Samuel 11:1-15; Psalm 14 *or* II Kings 4:42-44; Psalm 145:10-18
Ephesians 3:14-21; John 6:1-21
"God of Grace and God of Glory" (Eph.); "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me" (John)
"Stand By Me" (John); "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" (II Kings; John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Hosea 1:2-10; Psalm 85 *or* Genesis 18:20-32; Psalm 138
Colossians 2:6-15 (16-19); Luke 11:1-13
"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me" *or* "The Old Rugged Cross" (Col.)
"Children of the Heavenly Father" *or* "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN JULY 31 AND AUGUST 6 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 17:1-7, 15 *or* Isaiah 55:1-5; Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21
Romans 9:1-5; Matthew 14:13-21
"Come, O Thou Traveler Unknown" (Gen.); "Come, All of You" (Isa.; Matt.)
"Children of the Heavenly Father" *or* "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
II Samuel 11:26–12:13*a*; Psalm 51:1-12 *or* Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15; Psalm 78:23-29
Ephesians 4:1-16; John 6:24-35
"All Praise to Our Redeeming Lord" *or* "The Church's One Foundation" (Eph.)
"Grace Greater than Our Sin" (II Sam.; Ps. 51); "Break Thou the Bread of Life" (John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Hosea 11:1-11; Psalm 107:1-9, 43 *or* Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23; Psalm 49:1-12
Colossians 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21
"Have Thine Own Way, Lord" *or* "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (Col.)
"Jesus Calls Us" *or* "Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN AUGUST 7 AND 13 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28; Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45*b or* I Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 85:8-13
Romans 10:5-15; Matthew 14:22-33
"How Shall They Hear the Word of God" *or* "In Christ There Is No East or West" (Rom.)
"Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me" *or* "Stand By Me" (Gen.; I Kings; Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
II Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33; Psalm 130 or I Kings 19:4-8; Psalm 34:1-8
Ephesians 4:25–5:2; John 6:35, 41-51
"All Praise to Our Redeeming Lord" *or* "Help Us Accept Each Other" (Eph.)
"Become to Us the Living Bread" *or* "Bread of the World" *or* "Fill My Cup, Lord" (John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Isaiah 1:1, 10-20; Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23 *or* Genesis 15:1-6; Psalm 33:12-22
Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; Luke 12:32-40
"Marching to Zion" *or* "He Leadeth Me" (Gen.; Heb.); "A Charge to Keep I Have" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN AUGUST 14 AND 20 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Genesis 45:1-15; Psalm 133 *or* Isaiah 56:1, 6-8; Psalm 67
Romans 11:1-2*a*, 29-32; Matthew 15: (10-20) 21-28
"The God of Abraham Praise" (Rom.); "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" (Rom.; Matt.)
"God of Many Names" *or* "In Christ There Is No East or West" (Rom.; Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
I Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14; Psalm 111 *or* Proverbs 9:1-6; Psalm 34:9-14
Ephesians 5:15-20; John 6:51-58
"O Spirit of the Living God" (I Kings; Prov.); "When in Our Music God Is Glorified" (Eph.)
"Deck Thyself, My Soul, with Gladness" *or* "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" (John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19 *or* Jeremiah 23:23-29; Psalm 82
Hebrews 11:29–12:2; Luke 12:49-56
"Come, Let Us Join" *or* "Faith of Our Fathers" *or* "For All the Saints" (Heb.)
"O Young and Fearless Prophet" *or* "See How Great a Flame Aspires" (Isa.; Jer.; Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN AUGUST 21 AND 27 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Exodus 1:8–2:10; Psalm 124 *or* Isaiah 51:1-6; Psalm 138
Romans 12:1-8; Matthew 16:13-20
"One Bread, One Body" *or* "Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated" (Rom.)
"Onward, Christian Soldiers" *or* "The Church's One Foundation" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
I Kings 8:(1, 6, 10-11), 22-30, 41-43; Psalm 84 *or* Joshua 24:1-2*a*, 14-18; Psalm 34:15-22
Ephesians 6:10-20; John 6:56-69
"Soldiers of Christ, Arise" *or* "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus" (Eph.)
"Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation" (I Kings); "Wonderful Words of Life" (John)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6 *or* Isaiah 58:9*b*-14; Psalm 103:1-8
Hebrews 12:18-29; Luke 13:10-17
"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" *or* "O Spirit of the Living God" (Heb.)
"Heal Us, Emmanuel" *or* any hymn on healing (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN AUGUST 28 AND SEPTEMBER 3 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Exodus 3:1-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45*c or* Jeremiah 15:15-21; Psalm 26:1-8
Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28
"Go Down, Moses" *or* "Let My People Seek Their Freedom" (Exod.)
"The God of Abraham Praise" ("Praise to the Living God") (Exod.)
"Jesus, Lord, We Look to Thee" *or* "Jesus, United by Thy Grace" (Rom.)
"Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone" *or* "Take Up Thy Cross" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9 *or* Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9; Psalm 15
James 1:17-27; Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23
"Just a Closer Walk with Thee"; "Lord, I Want to Be a Christian"; "O for a Heart to Praise"

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Jeremiah 2:4-13; Psalm 81:1, 10-16 *or* Sirach 10:12-18 or Proverbs 25:6-7; Psalm 112
Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:1, 7-14
"How Firm a Foundation" *or* "Saranam, Saranam" (Heb.)
"Jesu, Jesu" *or* "Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service" (Heb.; Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 4 AND 10 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 149 *or* Ezekiel 33:7-11; Psalm 119:33-40
Romans 13:8-14; Matthew 18:15-20
"Awake, O Sleeper" *or* "Soldiers of Christ, Arise" (Rom.)
"All Praise to Our Redeeming Lord" *or* "Where Charity and Love Prevail" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23; Psalm 125 *or* Isaiah 35:4-7*a*; Psalm 146
James 2:1-10 (11-13), 14-17; Mark 7:24-37
"When the Church of Jesus" *or* "When the Poor Ones" (Proverbs; James)
"Open My Eyes, That I May See" *or* any hymn of healing (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Jeremiah 18:1-11; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 *or* Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1
Philemon 1:21; Luke 14:25-33
"Have Thine Own Way, Lord" (Jer.) *or* "Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 11 AND 17 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Exodus 14:19-31; Psalm 114 *or* Genesis 50:15-21; Psalm 103: (1-7) 8-13
Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35
"Lord, Speak to Me" *or* "When We Are Living" (Rom.)
"Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive"; "Help Us Accept Each Other" (Gen.; Rom.; Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Proverbs 1:20-33; Psalm 19 *or* Wisdom of Solomon 7:26–8:1 *or* Isaiah 50:4-9*a*; Psalm 116:1-9
James 3:1-12; Mark 8:27-38
"O Spirit of the Living God" (Prov.); "Take Up Thy Cross" *or* "Where He Leads Me" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28; Psalm 14 *or* Exodus 32:7-14; Psalm 51:1-10
I Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10
"Amazing Grace" *or* "Depth of Mercy" *or* "Immortal, Invisible" (I Tim.)
"O Zion, Haste" *or* "Rescue the Perishing" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 18 AND 24 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Exodus 16:2-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45 *or* Jonah 3:10–4:11; Psalm 145:1-8
Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16
"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah" (Exod.); "When We Are Living" (Phil.)
"All Praise to Our Redeeming Lord" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Proverbs 31:10-31; Psalm 1
or Wisdom of Solomon 1:16–2:1, 12-22 *or* Jeremiah 11:18-20; Psalm 54
James 3:13–4:3, 7-8*a*; Mark 9:30-37
"Blest Be the Tie" (James); "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus" *or* "Jesus Loves Me" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Jeremiah 8:18–9:1; Psalm 79:1-9 *or* Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113
I Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13
"There Is a Balm in Gilead" (Jer.); "I Surrender All" *or* "Jesus Calls Us" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 25 AND OCTOBER 1 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16 *or* Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32; Psalm 25:1-9
Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32
"All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine" *or* "At the Name of Jesus" (Phil.)
"A Charge to Keep I Have" *or* "Forth in Thy Name" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22; Psalm 124 *or* Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29; Psalm 19:7-14
James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-50
Any hymn on healing (James); "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life" (esp. v. 4) (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Jeremiah 32:1-3*a*, 6-15; Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16 *or* Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 113
I Timothy 6:6-19; Luke 16:19-31
"O Young and Fearless Prophet" *or* "Where Cross the Crowded Ways"
or "The Voice of God Is Calling" (all readings)

SUNDAY BETWEEN OCTOBER 2 AND 8 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20; Psalm 19 *or* Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:7-15
Philippians 3:4*b*-14; Matthew 21:33-46
"Trust and Obey" (Exod.); "All Praise to Our Redeeming Lord" (esp. v. 2) (Phil.)
"God Hath Spoken by the Prophets" *or* "Rescue the Perishing" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Job 1:1; 2:1-10; Psalm 26 *or* Genesis 2:18-24; Psalm 8
Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12; Mark 10:2-16
"The Head That Once Was Crowned" (Heb.); "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus" (Mark)
"As Man and Woman We Were Made" *or* "O Perfect Love" *or* "When Love Is Found" (Gen.; Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Lamentations 1:1-6; Lamentations 3:19-26 *or* Psalm 137
or Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4; Psalm 37:1-9
II Timothy 1:1-14; Luke 17:5-10
"Great Is Thy Faithfulness" (Lam.); "I Know Whom I Have Believed" (II Tim.)
"Give Me the Faith" *or* "Let Us Plead for Faith Alone" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN OCTOBER 9 AND 15 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Exodus 32:1-14; Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23 *or* Isaiah 25:1-9; Psalm 23
Philippians 4:1-9; Matthew 22:1-14
"Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart" (Phil.); "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" (Ps. 23; Matt.)
"Come, Sinners, to the Gospel Feast" *or* "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Job 23:1-9, 16-17; Psalm 22:1-15 *or* Amos 5:6-7, 10-15; Psalm 90:12-17
Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31
"Leave It There" *or* "Precious Lord" *or* "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" (Job)
"Jesus Calls Us" *or* "Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7; Psalm 66:1-12 *or* II Kings 5:1-3, 7-15*c*; Psalm 111
II Timothy 2:8-15; Luke 17:11-19
"Faith of Our Fathers" (II Tim.); any hymn on healing (II Kings; Luke)
"For the Beauty of the Earth" *or* "Now Thank We All Our God" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN OCTOBER 16 AND 22 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Exodus 33:12-23; Psalm 99 *or* Isaiah 45:1-7; Psalm 96:1-9 (10-13)
I Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22
"Rock of Ages" (Exod.); "Jesus Calls Us" *or* "O Jesus, I Have Promised" (I Thess.; Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Job 38:1-7 (34-41); Psalm 104:1-9, 24, 35*c* *or* Isaiah 53:4-12; Psalm 91:9-16
Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 10:35-45
"God Moves in a Mysterious Way"; "Immortal, Invisible"; "O Worship the King" (Job; Ps. 104)
"Hallelujah! What a Savior" (Isa.); "Are Ye Able"; "The Church of Christ in Every Age" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Jeremiah 31:27-34; Psalm 119:97-104 *or* Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 121
II Timothy 3:14–4:5; Luke 18:1-8
"Break Thou the Bread of Life" *or* "Thy Word Is a Lamp"
or "Wonderful Words of Life" (Jer.; Ps. 119; II Tim.)
"Come, O Thou Traveler Unknown" (Gen.); "Precious Lord" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN OCTOBER 23 AND 29 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17 *or* Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18; Psalm 1
I Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-46
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" *or* "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go" (Lev.; Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Job 42:1-6, 10-17; Psalm 34:1-8, (19-22) *or* Jeremiah 31:7-9; Psalm 126
Hebrews 7:23-28; Mark 10:46-52
"Blow Ye the Trumpet, Blow" (Heb.); "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Joel 2:23-32; Psalm 65 *or* Sirach 35:12-17 *or* Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22; Psalm 84:1-7
II Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18; Luke 18:9-14
"Spirit Song" (Joel); "It's Me, It's Me, O Lord" *or* "Just as I Am" *or* "Rock of Ages" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN OCTOBER 30 AND NOVEMBER 5 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Joshua 3:7-17; Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37 *or* Micah 3:5-12; Psalm 43
I Thessalonians 2:9-13; Matthew 23:1-12
"Jesu, Jesu" *or* "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Ruth 1:1-18; Psalm 146 *or* Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Psalm 119:1-8
Hebrews 9:11-14; Mark 12:28-34
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" *or* "Where Charity and Love Prevail"
or "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go" (Ruth; Deut.; Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4; Psalm 119:137-144 *or* Isaiah 1:10-18; Psalm 32:1-7
II Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12; Luke 19:1-10
"I Know Whom I Have Believed" (II Thess.); "I Surrender All" *or* "Where He Leads Me" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN NOVEMBER 6 AND 12 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Joshua 24:1-3*a*, 14-25; Psalm 78:1-7
or Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-16 *or* Amos 5:18-24; Wisdom of Solomon 6:17-20 *or* Psalm 70
I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13
"How Great Thou Art" *or* "Rejoice, the Lord Is King" (I Thess.)
"God of Love and God of Power" *or* "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying" (Matt.)
" 'Sleepers, Wake!' A Voice Astounds Us" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17; Psalm 127 *or* I Kings 17:8-16; Psalm 146
Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44
"How Great Thou Art" (Heb.); "Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Haggai 1:15*b*–2:9; Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21 *or* Psalm 98 *or* Job 19:23-27*a*; Psalm 17:1-9

II Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17; Luke 20:27-38
"Hymn of Promise" *or* "Sing with All the Saints in Glory" *or* "When We Are Living" (Luke)

SUNDAY BETWEEN NOVEMBER 13 AND 19 INCLUSIVE

Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999
Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123 *or* Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18; Psalm 90:1-8, (9-11), 12
I Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30
"A Charge to Keep I Have" *or* "Awake, O Sleeper" (I Thess.)
"Canta, Debora, Canta" (Judges); "Take My Life and Let It Be Consecrated" (Matt.)

Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000
I Samuel 1:4-20; I Samuel 2:1-10 *or* Daniel 12:1-3; Psalm 16
Hebrews 10:11-14 (15-18) 19-25; Mark 13:1-8
"How Great Thou Art" *or* "I Am Thine, O Lord" (Heb.)
"A Charge to Keep I Have" *or* "My Lord, What a Morning" (Mark)

Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001
Isaiah 65:17-25; Isaiah 12 *or* Malachi 4:1-2*a*; Psalm 98
II Thessalonians 3:6-13; Luke 21:5-19
"Marching to Zion" (Isa.); "Forth in Thy Name" (II Thess.)
"Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone" *or* "Standing on the Promises" (Luke)

C. Christ the King

This is both the Last Sunday After Pentecost and the last Sunday in the Christian Year. It is not so much a climax in itself, however, as it is a transitional Sunday leading directly to Advent, the Christmas cycle, and the new Christian Year. People are already thinking about Christmas, and the observance of Christ the King can help them prepare by stressing the continuity between the celebration of the kingship, or sovereignty, of Christ and the expectation of Christ's coming again in sovereign glory which opens the Advent Season. We have more than a baby Jesus at Christmas; we have a sovereign Christ. "Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth receive her King."

This day occurs between November 20 and 26 inclusive. Since Thanksgiving occurs the Thursday between November 22 and 28 inclusive, Christ the King, more often than not, coincides with the Sunday before Thanksgiving. If a congregation participates in union services, or holds services of its own, on Thanksgiving Eve or Thanksgiving Day, then it is redundant to celebrate the previous Sunday as Thanksgiving Sunday. It is also possible for a service to combine elements of the two celebrations. Thanksgiving resources will be found later in this book.

In preparing for the celebration of Christ the King it is important to study the Scripture readings. In a given year there will be the prefiguration of Christ's rule in the Old Testament, a particular unfolding of the meaning of the messianic age in the Epistle and a portrayal of the paradox: Servant/King.

White is the customary color for this day. Gold is also appropriate; even a little purple may be introduced, as the color of royalty and in anticipation of the coming transition into Advent. Symbols of royalty may be used—crown, orb, scepter—especially when these contain, or are combined with, a cross. Images of Christ as Pantocrator (ruler of all) are appropriate.

GATHERING

Festival music based upon the hymn tunes is particularly appropriate as the people gather. Symbols and banners of royalty may be brought in procession if the space and style permit.

GREETING

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God,
"who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Blessing and honor and glory and might be unto the Lamb!

Worthy is Christ who has ransomed us by his blood
from every tribe and tongue and nation,
and made his people a kingdom, and priests to our God.

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,
who was and is and is to come!

HYMN OF PRAISE *Appropriate hymns include:*

"O Worship the King"
"Jesus Shall Reign"
"Crown Him with Many Crowns"
"Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus"
"The Head That Once Was Crowned"
"Hail to the Lord's Anointed"
"Rejoice, the Lord Is King"
"At the Name of Jesus"
If there is an entrance hymn with procession, it precedes the greeting.

OPENING PRAYER

All-powerful God,
your only Son came to earth
in the form of a slave
and is now enthroned at your right hand,
where he rules in glory.
As he reigns as King in our hearts,
may we rejoice in his peace,
glory in his justice,
and live in his love.
For with you and the Holy Spirit
he rules now and for ever.

Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
II Samuel 23:1-7 *or* Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Jeremiah 23:1-6	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

PSALM

Psalm 100 *or* 95:1-*7a*	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Psalm 132:1-12 (13-18) *or* Psalm 93	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Luke 1:68-79 *or* Psalm 46	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

SECOND LESSON

Ephesians 1:15-23	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
Revelation 1:*4b*-8	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Colossians 1:11-20	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

ALLELUIA (HYMN OR ANTHEM)

"Soon and Very Soon" or "Majesty, Worship His Majesty" might be suitable.

GOSPEL

Matthew 25:31-46	(Year A: 1993, 1996, 1999)
John 18:33-37	(Year B: 1994, 1997, 2000)
Luke 23:33-43	(Year C: 1995, 1998, 2001)

SERMON

[CREED] *(especially if Holy Communion is not celebrated)*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE OR PASTORAL PRAYER

To each petition the people may respond: **By the mercies of Christ, hear us.** *Another possible response is* **Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom,** *available in a beautiful musical setting in* Music from Taize, *by Jacques Berthier (Chicago, G.I.A. Publications, 1981), p. 9.*

OFFERING

One of the above hymns may be sung, or at the presentation of the offerings one or two stanzas of a Christ-centered hymn such as "Rejoice, the Lord Is King"; "Lead On, O King Eternal" (stanza 4); or "Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service" (stanza 1) may be sung.

If Holy Communion is not celebrated, the service concludes with a prayer of thanksgiving, the Lord's Prayer, and a dismissal with blessing.

If Holy Communion is celebrated, the table is prepared during the offering and the service continues as follows:

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

The Elements

At the Last Supper, our Lord took bread and wine, gave thanks to God, and declared that they were his body and blood! He shared the bread and wine with his disciples, and told them to "Do this for the remembrance" of him. After his crucifixion and resurrection, he revealed himself to two of his disciples on the Emmaus road in the breaking of bread. Christ's followers of all times have had an insatiable appetite for this bread and wine, because they know that in them the Lord himself is present. When the prayer and actions of the Upper Room are repeated by the presiding minister, we share the very life of the crucified and risen Christ. The Lord is truly present "in, with, and under" the bread and the wine in the Holy Communion.

Bread signifies several things biblically and in our own time. The ancient Israelites believed that bread came from the hands of God—and indeed, in the Eucharist, it does. Bread also carries the image of death and resurrection: the wheat seed is buried in the earth, where it comes to life and sprouts; and then the grain is crushed to be harvested so that flour can be made and bread can rise. Bread also, of course, satisfies basic human hunger.

The early Christian church always used ordinary bread for Holy Communion, a practice that is still preferred. A whole loaf of bread has advantages over individual wafers, because the one loaf is a powerful symbol of our unity in Christ: "When we break the bread, is it not a means of sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, many as we are, are one body; for it is one loaf of which we all partake" (1 Cor. 10:16–17, NEB). The breaking and sharing of the bread is a symbol also of our Lord's crucifixion, a witness to his own body being broken on the tree of the cross.

Carefully made homemade wheat bread is particularly good for the Eucharist, for its visual reminder that God takes common earthly elements and human labor and uses them for his extraordinary purposes. Bread that crumbles easily should be avoided. When a whole loaf of bread is used, provision should be made for cleaning the chancel after the service. Several sacramental bread recipes are provided later in this chapter.

Wine is used for the Holy Communion because that is what Christ used in the Upper Room and directed us to use when we celebrate his holy meal. In addition, wine is used because of its unique meaning. While Psalm 104 speaks of bread for strength, it speaks of wine for gladdening our hearts. Bread was a staple in ancient Jewish meals, but wine was used only for festive occasions. The purpose of wine was not to quench thirst, but to give joy and life. Thus, wine is not only the blood of Christ by its institution by him; it is also a sign of the festive and joyful nature of the eucharistic meal. Grape juice, which is artificial wine, is not appropriate for this sacramental feast.

The wine may be homemade, purchased commercially, or purchased from an ecclesiastical supplier. A fine dinner wine should be used, avoiding sweet port. Only wine made from grapes should be used. The wine may be white or red. Red, however, is more difficult to remove from linens.

The Credence and Offertory Table

The credence is a small shelf or table near the altar on which the eucharistic vessels and missal stand are kept prior to the offering. Many churches have two credences—one for the sacramental vessels and one for the offering plates and alms basins.

The offertory table is a small table near the rear of the nave where the bread and wine are placed until they are carried forward, along with the money offering, during the offertory.

Both the credence and offertory tables are covered with white linen cloths.

Setting the Table of the Lord

Preparation of the altar for the eucharistic feast should be done well ahead of the celebration. The first tasks are to be certain that the chancel and its furnishings are clean, that unnecessary items are removed, that the correct paraments are in

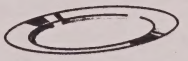
Missal Stand and Altar Book

The missal stand holds the large service book (*Lutheran Book of Worship Ministers Edition*). It may be a wood or metal bookstand, or simply be a cushion on which the service book rests for the celebration of the Eucharist. The missal stand and altar book should be removed when not in use.

Eucharistic Vessels

Vessels used for the celebration of the Holy Communion usually constitute a matched set of fine metal such as silver or gold. Pewter or earthenware vessels may also be used. The appearance and material of the vessels should be worthy of the precious elements they hold—containers appropriate for the body and blood of our Lord. A minimum set of eucharistic vessels includes a chalice, paten, and flagon or cruet. If hosts (rather than a whole loaf of bread) are used, a ciborium or host box is also needed.

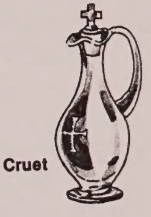
The chalice is the large cup used for the consecration and distribution of the sacramental wine. The cup portion of the chalice is attached to the base (or foot) by the stem. If the distribution is not by common cup, the chalice needs a pouring lip. In this situation, the wine is poured from the chalice into a small glass held by the communicant. Prefilled individual glasses should *never* be used. Increasingly, congregations are returning to the traditional common cup, because it is a fuller symbol of the unity we share in Christ..



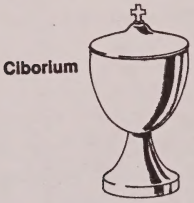
The paten is the plate used for the sacramental bread. Its size depends on the type of bread used. It is traditional practice for the paten to be set on the rim of the chalice for vesting in veil and burse. When a whole loaf of bread is used, however, another larger paten or basket is usually also needed.

A flagon or cruet is usually used to hold the wine before it is poured into the chalice. The flagon is a tall covered pitcher,

usually made of fine metal. The cruet is a glass vessel with a stopper, often topped with a cross.



When hosts (wafers) rather than a loaf of bread are used, they are kept in a ciborium or host box. A ciborium is similar to a chalice, but has a fitted lid. A host box (also known as a pyx) is a short round container with a lid.



In some congregations the presiding minister ritually cleanses his or her hands prior to the Great Thanksgiving. For this, a small dish known as a lavabo bowl is used. The water is poured over the hands from a cruet, and the hands are dried with a lavabo towel. This is a small linen towel, usually twelve by eighteen inches. It is folded lengthwise, right side out, in thirds, so that it will hang evenly over the arm of the assisting minister or acolyte.

A spoon is sometimes useful for removing foreign particles from the wine in a chalice. The bowl of a spoon made for this purpose is perforated.

altar with the right side up. Thus, when it is refolded as the altar is cleared, crumbs of bread are folded into it and not dropped onto the mensa or the floor. It is carried to and from the altar in the burse. A fresh corporal is used for each celebration of the Eucharist, and each congregation needs several corporals.

Pall

Used to cover the chalice before and after Communion, the pall is a linen-covered square of stiff cardboard, aluminum, or plastic. The size of the pall is determined by the diameter of the chalice, but it is usually six to nine inches square. The top of the pall is often embroidered in white with a cross or a symbol relating to the church year.

The linen covering the pall is usually sewn as a pocket, so that the stiff lining may be removed for laundering the linen. A clean pall should always be used.

Purificators

Purificators are square linen napkins used to wipe the rim of the chalice during the distribution. The size depends on the size of the chalice, since the purificator is draped over the chalice before and after the celebration, but the size is often twelve to fifteen inches square. It is folded like the corporal, except right side out.

Several purificators are needed for each chalice for each eucharistic service. When not in use, they are kept in the burse.

Veil

Several kinds of veils may be used. The chalice veil matches the paraments and vestments in the color for the day; when this veil is used, the burse matches the veil in color and fabric.

When a whole loaf of bread is used for the Eucharist, a white linen veil—perhaps a second corporal or a large purificator—is sometimes used to cover it prior to the offertory.

Some congregations use a large white linen veil as a post-Communion cover for the vessels and elements.

Burse

Sacramental linens are carried to and from the altar in the burse, which is an envelopelike case. The burse matches the chalice veil, paraments, stole, and chasuble in the liturgical color for the day. It is constructed with two squares of cardboard, about nine inches square, each covered with linen and bound together on one side. This is covered with another piece of fabric, matching the paraments, so that the sides are pleated like bellows.

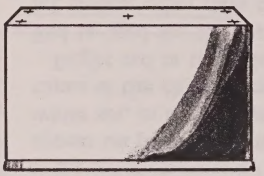
Congregations using chalice veils and burses will need a set in each liturgical color.

Paraments

Paraments adorn the altar in the appointed colors of the liturgical day or season, helping to make the altar the visual focus of the worship space. In pointing to the day or season through colors and symbols, paraments serve also devotional and educational functions. Paraments have been used since at least the fifth century A.D.

There are five types of altar paraments in use: the frontal, the Laudean frontal, the superfrontal, the antependium, and the frontlet. The type selected for a specific altar is influenced by the style of the altar, and may also vary according to the time of the church year.

A frontal covers the entire front of the altar, from the front top edge of the mensa down to the predella. This type of frontal



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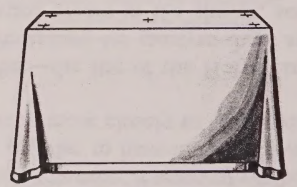

Laudean Frontal

may be attached to the protector linen, which is covered with the fair linen.

A Laudean frontal (sometimes known as a Jacobean frontal)

covers the entire altar, hanging to the predella on all four sides of a freestanding altar or the sides and front of an east-wall altar.

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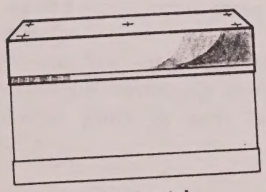

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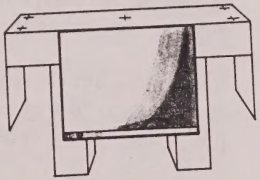
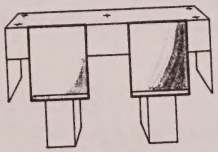


Antependium

An antependium, much narrower than a frontal, covers one-third to one-half the front of the altar. It may hang all the way to the floor, but usually is made to extend over the front of the altar about three-fourths the height of the altar. It is hung in the center of the altar.



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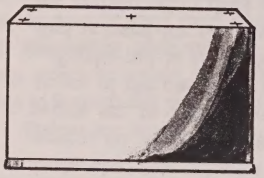

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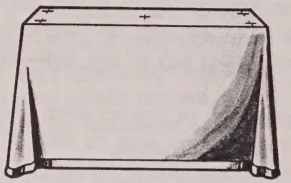

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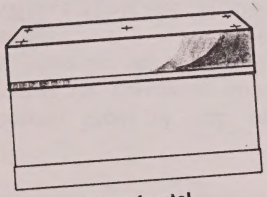

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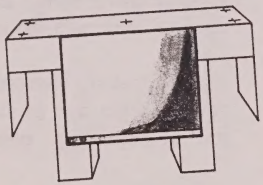

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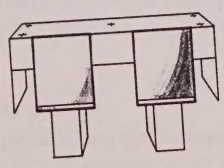

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abundant flowers throughout the season (replacing them with fresh flowers as necessary, of course).

The Ascension of Our Lord

The festival of the Ascension is forty days after Easter, and it celebrates Christ's triumphant ascension from the Mount of Olives to heaven.

White paraments are used, and white flowers are fitting.

The paschal candle may be extinguished at the reading of the gospel on Ascension Day. However, it is better to allow the candle to burn through the Day of Pentecost. Regardless of when it is extinguished, it is moved after that service to its place near the font (where it is lighted only on days when Holy Baptism is celebrated).

The Day of Pentecost

The Day of Pentecost occurs fifty days after Easter. It celebrates the time when the Holy Spirit descended to the believers gathered in Jerusalem. It is, therefore, a day when decorations and ceremonies should be reminders of the Spirit.

Bright red paraments are used on the Day of Pentecost, reminders of the fire of the Spirit. Red gladioli may be used for altar flowers, since their shape suggests tongues of fire. To emphasize the importance of this festival, the chancel may be adorned with red geraniums or other red flowers. They should be arranged to call attention to the altar, although plants and flowers are never placed on the mensa of the altar. Following Pentecost worship services, the geraniums may be planted on the church grounds.

Pentecost is an appropriate day for full and festive processions, and banners may be made in preparation for the procession. Bells may be attached to the banners to add a joyous note to the day. The presiding minister may wear a red cope for the Pentecost procession.

Holy Communion is normally celebrated on this festival, and the altar guild will make the usual preparations. (See chap. 7.)

Since the Day of Pentecost is an appropriate time for Holy Baptism as well as for Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation), the altar guild should seek advance instructions from the pastor. (See chap. 6 regarding Baptism, and chap. 9 regarding Confirmation preparations.)

The Season after Pentecost

Except for festivals, Sundays after Pentecost use green paraments as a reminder that this is a season of spiritual growth.

The Holy Trinity

This festival occurs on the First Sunday after Pentecost, and it celebrates the doctrine of the Trinity, one God in three persons. Paraments are white.

Reformation Day

Reformation Day occurs on October 31, but it may be observed on the Sunday preceding that date. It is a day for giving thanks for Martin Luther and the other reformers, but it also calls attention to the ongoing need for renewal of the church. Paraments are bright red.

All Saints' Day

This festival commemorates all the baptized people of God who have died in the faith. All Saints' Day is November 1, but it may be observed on the Sunday following that date. The liturgical color is white.

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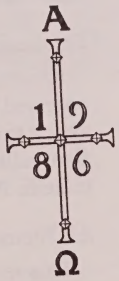
Easter preparations are made with white or gold paraments and flowers. Linens and ornaments that had been removed on Maundy Thursday are now replaced.



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The usual preparations are made for the Eucharist (see chap. 7). Consider using a loaf of raised bread as a symbolic reminder of our Lord's resurrection.

Easter

The festival of the Resurrection of Our Lord is the queen of all Christian festivals, and all preparations for its celebration should make its significance apparent. All of the furnishings and appointments should be thoroughly cleaned and polished. The best linens should be used, and they should be spotlessly white and newly ironed. Gold paraments may be used on Easter Day; white paraments are used during the rest of the Easter season. All paraments and vestments should be cleaned and ironed in preparation for the Easter celebration.

White or gold flowers are appropriate, and abundant Easter lilies and other flowers (including tulips, daffodils, and blooming azaleas) may be used to adorn the chancel. Flowers and plants, however, are never placed on the altar itself. All decorations should serve to direct worshipers' attention to the altar, the paschal candle, the font, and the pulpit or reading desk.

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Easter Day occurs between March 22 and April 25. The Easter celebration lasts for fifty days, and it is helpful to have

abundant flowers throughout the season (replacing them with fresh flowers as necessary, of course).

The Ascension of Our Lord

The festival of the Ascension is forty days after Easter, and it celebrates Christ's triumphant ascension from the Mount of Olives to heaven.

White paraments are used, and white flowers are fitting.

The paschal candle may be extinguished at the reading of the gospel on Ascension Day. However, it is better to allow the candle to burn through the Day of Pentecost. Regardless of when it is extinguished, it is moved after that service to its place near the font (where it is lighted only on days when Holy Baptism is celebrated).

The Day of Pentecost

The Day of Pentecost occurs fifty days after Easter. It celebrates the time when the Holy Spirit descended to the believers gathered in Jerusalem. It is, therefore, a day when decorations and ceremonies should be reminders of the Spirit.

Bright red paraments are used on the Day of Pentecost, reminders of the fire of the Spirit. Red gladioli may be used for altar flowers, since their shape suggests tongues of fire. To emphasize the importance of this festival, the chancel may be adorned with red geraniums or other red flowers. They should be arranged to call attention to the altar, although plants and flowers are never placed on the mensa of the altar. Following Pentecost worship services, the geraniums may be planted on the church grounds.

Pentecost is an appropriate day for full and festive processions, and banners may be made in preparation for the procession. Bells may be attached to the banners to add a joyous note to the day. The presiding minister may wear a red cope for the Pentecost procession.

Holy Communion is normally celebrated on this festival, and the altar guild will make the usual preparations. (See chap. 7.)

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Except for festivals, Sundays after Pentecost use green paraments as a reminder that this is a season of spiritual growth.

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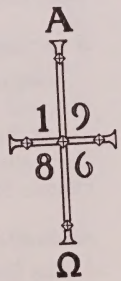

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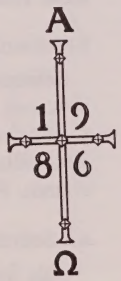

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yourself. You may sense the presence of God when you recall your baptism, or at prayer, or in hearing the word of God. But few moments in life reach you as directly as does this weekly opportunity at the Lord's Supper.

What are you thinking as you receive the bread and wine, or when you return to your chair and listen to the choir and the organ, or, sometimes better, when you enjoy the silence broken only by the footfall of the communing people and the word "for you" spoken to each? What are you thinking as you join in the brief hymn to the LAMB OF GOD who "takes away the sin of the world"?

The act of communing takes but seconds, and participating in a congregational COMMUNION only a few minutes. Today, as so often before, you resolved to use the time to good advantage. Will you have done so? Admit it, some days your resolve goes as quickly as it came. You were going to concentrate on the "for you . . . for forgiveness." Instead your mind wandered, and you cannot later recall anything at all of what passed through it. Not a trace of ecstasy went with this personal moment in the meal. You were in the presence of God and, had it not been for the slight nervousness you felt going up to the front of an assembly, you might have stifled a yawn. You let some passing thing distract you. A scuff on the shoe of the minister. The smell of nicotine on a ministerial hand. The choir singing a bit flat, a jar to your musical sensibilities. A candle dripping on the new church carpet. Had you remembered to have that spot removed from the back of your coat? What will people think? Who donated those altar flowers? Will I get a raise this week?

Here you are, back in your seat. Should you feel guilty about having let the moment pass? Isn't it just human nature to have a wandering mind? You really don't believe the people who claim they can clear their heads and have pure and constant contact with God. There must be a lot of hypocrites here. Why did so little happen?

4. Reflections during Communion

The minutes of reflection during Communion do not allow time for developing a well-rounded theology. Indeed, they hardly suffice for sustaining a simple sequence of serious thought. But one can use this time, with or without some hymns or prayers, to place a few little mental levers on a few spiritual fulcrums, in order to lift them at other times, in other places. One might reflect, for example, on the feelings experienced, the forgiveness received, the presence promised, or the commitment entailed.

Experience

What am I supposed to feel? Am I *supposed* to feel? The whole idea of receiving forgiveness of sins implies recognizing how far you are from God and in how much need you stand. But what if you do not *feel* guilty or agonized?

You have to admit that different personality types will react variously. William James talked about "the sick soul" and "the healthy-minded" as psychological models. The sick soul will have no difficulty feeling in need of forgiveness. The trembling of a leaf has made hearts leap in fear from Leviticus to Luther to modern times. The whole universe seems then to be personified. It takes the form of the accusing finger of God. The victim of such sin-sickness may simply be working out some problem left over from a bad childhood. Parents placed too many restrictions on the conscience, and adult life became nothing more than a "Do I dare?" or "Someone is watching!" Such a person hesitates to take bold action, fearing the consequences.

altar with the right side up. Thus, when it is refolded as the altar is cleared, crumbs of bread are folded into it and not dropped onto the mensa or the floor. It is carried to and from the altar in the burse. A fresh corporal is used for each celebration of the Eucharist, and each congregation needs several corporals.

Pall

Used to cover the chalice before and after Communion, the pall is a linen-covered square of stiff cardboard, aluminum, or plastic. The size of the pall is determined by the diameter of the chalice, but it is usually six to nine inches square. The top of the pall is often embroidered in white with a cross or a symbol relating to the church year.

The linen covering the pall is usually sewn as a pocket, so that the stiff lining may be removed for laundering the linen. A clean pall should always be used.

Purificators

Purificators are square linen napkins used to wipe the rim of the chalice during the distribution. The size depends on the size of the chalice, since the purificator is draped over the chalice before and after the celebration, but the size is often twelve to fifteen inches square. It is folded like the corporal, except right side out.

Several purificators are needed for each chalice for each eucharistic service. When not in use, they are kept in the burse.

Veil

Several kinds of veils may be used. The chalice veil matches the paraments and vestments in the color for the day; when this veil is used, the burse matches the veil in color and fabric.

When a whole loaf of bread is used for the Eucharist, a white linen veil—perhaps a second corporal or a large purificator—is sometimes used to cover it prior to the offertory.

Some congregations use a large white linen veil as a post-Communion cover for the vessels and elements.

Burse

Sacramental linens are carried to and from the altar in the burse, which is an envelopelike case. The burse matches the chalice veil, paraments, stole, and chasuble in the liturgical color for the day. It is constructed with two squares of cardboard, about nine inches square, each covered with linen and bound together on one side. This is covered with another piece of fabric, matching the paraments, so that the sides are pleated like bellows.

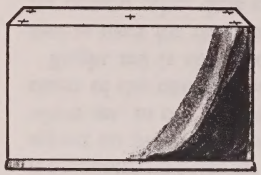
Congregations using chalice veils and burses will need a set in each liturgical color.

Paraments

Paraments adorn the altar in the appointed colors of the liturgical day or season, helping to make the altar the visual focus of the worship space. In pointing to the day or season through colors and symbols, paraments serve also devotional and educational functions. Paraments have been used since at least the fifth century A.D.

There are five types of altar paraments in use: the frontal, the Laudean frontal, the superfrontal, the antependium, and the frontlet. The type selected for a specific altar is influenced by the style of the altar, and may also vary according to the time of the church year.

A frontal covers the entire front of the altar, from the front top edge of the mensa down to the predella. This type of frontal



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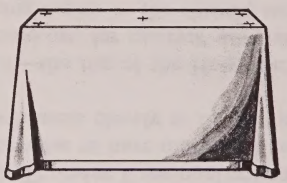


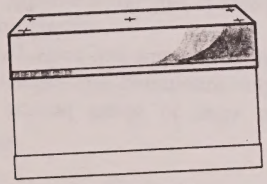
Laudean Frontal

may be attached to the protector linen, which is covered with the fair linen.

A Laudean frontal (sometimes known as a Jacobean frontal)

covers the entire altar, hanging to the predella on all four sides of a freestanding altar or the sides and front of an east-wall altar.

A superfrontal may be used alone or as a part of the frontal. It covers the length of the altar, but hangs down only ten to twelve inches from the top of the mensa.



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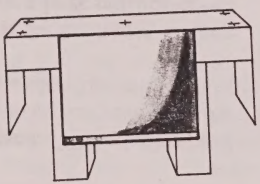
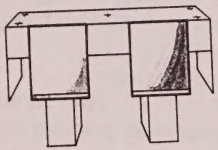


Antependium

An antependium, much narrower than a frontal, covers one-third to one-half the front of the altar. It may hang all the way to the floor, but usually is made to extend over the front of the altar about three-fourths the height of the altar. It is hung in the center of the altar.



Frontlets

Frontlets are hung down the front of the altar in pairs. They are usually two to three feet wide and extend about two-thirds of the distance to the predella.

Colors

Congregations will find it useful to provide at least eight sets of paraments and vestments to accommodate the colors of the church year.

White is the color of light, gladness, purity, and joy in Christ. White is thus the liturgical color appointed for festivals of

Christ—the Annunciation, the Visitation, Christmas and its season, the Name of Jesus, the Epiphany, the Baptism of Our Lord, the Presentation, the Transfiguration, the Sundays of Easter (although gold is an alternate color for Easter Day itself), and Christ the King. White is also used for certain other festivals (such as the Holy Trinity) and commemorations, and it is the alternate color for Maundy Thursday. If seasonal symbols appear on paraments, it may be wise to have more than one white set, in order to relate each more closely to the varying times of the church year.

Bright red is the color of fire—the fire of the Holy Spirit. Red is used for the Day of Pentecost, for martyrs' days, and for certain other days celebrating events in the church, such as Reformation, ordination, and church dedications and anniversaries.

Scarlet is a hue deeper than red; scarlet is the color of blood. It is used during Holy Week—from the Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday) through Maundy Thursday. The color should be selected carefully so it is not confused with the bright red used for festivals.

Purple is the penitential color of Lent. It is also the alternate color for Advent, when it is interpreted as the royal color of the coming King. In congregations where purple is used for both Lent and Advent, it will be helpful to have two different sets, with appropriate and distinctive symbols on each.

Blue is the preferred color for Advent, because it is the color of hope, a central theme of Advent. Pale and navy blues should be avoided, in favor of royal blue.

Green is the color of growth, and it is used during the seasons after Epiphany and Pentecost.

Gold is the appropriate alternate color for Easter Day, since that day is the "queen of feasts," the most important day in the church year. The use of gold paraments on that one day helps to distinguish it in a special visual way from the remainder of the year.

Black, the color of ashes and humiliation and mourning, is appointed for Ash Wednesday.

Thanksgiving. Real bread rather than wafers may be used, as a reminder that God uses the fruits of the earth for God's gracious purposes.

Christ the King

The last Sunday after Pentecost celebrates the kingship of Christ and is so named. The liturgical color is white.

12
Organization

To be effective servants of the liturgy, an altar guild needs to be organized in a way that facilitates its work. Criteria for membership and principles of organization are established by the pastor and the parish worship committee, and are approved by the church council. A sample constitution is included in appendix B of this book.

Membership

An important qualification for all members of the altar guild is a sense of awe in the presence of the Holy God. This awe gives rise to the spirit of reverence that is so essential to the altar guild's work. The ministry of liturgical preparations is a high privilege for a Christian, and dedicated altar guild members will carry out their responsibilities with awe, joy, gratitude, and love for their Lord. Tasks of the altar guild are not a burden but a delight, not a duty but a high privilege. There is no room in the altar guild for complaining or grumbling. If the work cannot be done with joy and a sense of privilege, a replacement should be sought.

Another important characteristic is humility. While it is necessary for altar guild members to be skilled in various ways, each member is only one among many servants of the liturgy. The privilege of serving God is shared with other altar guild

God be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to God.
Let us give thanks to the Almighty God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Blessed are you, O God,
who with your Word and Holy Spirit
created all things and called them good.

And so, with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven,
we praise your name
and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One
who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you,
and blessed is your eternal Word,
who became flesh
and came to dwell among us
in Jesus Christ:
whom your Spirit anointed
to preach good news to the poor,
to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,

to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
and to announce that the time had come
when you would save your people;
who healed the sick, fed the hungry,
and ate with sinners.

On the night before meeting with death,
Jesus took bread,
gave thanks to you,
broke the bread,
gave it to the disciples, and said:
"Take, eat;
this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over
Jesus took the cup,
gave thanks to you,
gave it to the disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance
of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves
in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us,
gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us
the body and blood of Christ,
that in unity we may be for the world
the body of Christ,
redeemed by Christ's blood,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at your table for ever.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honor and glory is yours,
Almighty God, now and for ever.

Amen.

The minister breaks the bread in silence, or while saying:
Because there is one loaf,
we, who are many, are one body,
for we all partake of the one loaf.
The bread which we break
is a sharing in the body of Christ.

The minister lifts the cup in silence, or while saying:
The cup over which we give thanks
is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

11

Preparation for the Church Year

The church year is a wonderful way in which we recall and celebrate the mighty acts of God. It is a reminder of God's constant activity—not only God's interventions into human history, but also his grace-filled activity among us now. Through the liturgical year we realize that we are a part of God's ongoing saving and loving activity.

For many centuries the church year calendar has shaped our worship: the readings, the sermons, the hymns and other music, the color of the paraments, and the appearance of worship space. Through a rich observance of the church year, each season and festival can make its fullest impact on the assembled congregation. The church is the grateful recipient and careful guardian of the liturgical year. Faithful observance of it is both a privilege and a responsibility. In its ministry of preparation, it is important for the altar guild to study the background and significance of the various liturgical seasons and festivals. Each day of the church year has its own unique character and message, determined by the appointed lessons for the day. Close attention to these lessons enables us to celebrate meaningfully the events in the life of our Lord and in church history.

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5. Divide the dough into 8 equal parts. Form each part into a ball, and place on floured waxed paper.
6. Let the balls rise again for about 30 minutes.
7. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 15 minutes.
8. Roll each ball on floured paper into a circle about 4 inches in diameter.
9. Flour 2 cookie sheets. Arrange 4 balls on each sheet.
10. Place the cookie sheets in the middle of the oven, and bake for about 3 minutes. The bread will look puffed in the middle, and the outside will be off-white with brown spots.

After cooling, the pita bread should be wrapped tightly to prevent drying. It may be stored in a refrigerator for several days. For longer storage, wrap well and freeze.

Flat Whole Wheat Bread

This recipe makes 4 flat 10-inch loaves, each of which will serve about 200 communicants. It is provided by Pat Frost, of St. Paul Lutheran Church, New City, New York.

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Mix well together the following ingredients:
   6½ cups whole wheat flour
   ¼ cup olive oil
   2 tablespoons honey
   1 teaspoon salt
   2½ cups warm milk
   2 eggs
3. Divide the dough into 4 sections. Knead each section on a floured breadboard, and roll out each to make a 10-inch circle.
4. Slightly oil cookie sheets with a paper towel. On cookie sheet, carefully score each loaf vertically and horizontally, with spaces about 5/8 inch wide; do not score through to bottom.
5. Bake for 20 minutes.
6. Put on racks to cool.

These loaves may be frozen for storage. The recipe may be halved.

White Communion Bread

The following is adapted from a Coventry Cathedral recipe. It makes 4 to 6 loaves.

1 package active dry yeast
½ cup warm water (110–15 degrees Fahrenheit)
1¾ cups lukewarm milk (scalded then cooled)
7–7½ cups flour
3 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon salt
2 tablespoons shortening

In bowl, dissolve yeast in water. Sift flour. Add milk, sugar, salt, shortening, and half of flour to yeast and water mixture. Beat until smooth. With hand, mix in enough remaining flour until dough cleans the bowl. Turn onto lightly floured board. Cover; let rest 10–15 minutes. Knead 10 minutes until smooth. Place in greased bowl; bring greased side up. Cover with cloth. Let rise in warm place (85 degrees Fahrenheit) until double, about 1 or 2 hours.

Punch down, and turn out on floured board. Divide dough into 4 to 6 loaves (2½ ounces each). Cover, and let rest for 10 minutes. Roll out each loaf with a rolling pin into a 4-inch round. Mark with a deep cross. Arrange on a flat cookie sheet. Let rise in warm place for 40–50 minutes.

Heat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. Bake 15 minutes or until golden brown. Cool slowly away from direct drafts.

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The preferred color for Advent is blue, the color of hope. The alternate color is purple, the royal color of the coming King. Blue, however, helps make apparent the differences between Advent and Lent.

One of the themes of Advent is darkness, and it is thus appropriate to use fewer candles during these four weeks. An Advent wreath may be hung or set near the altar. The wreath is a circle with four candles, and it may be covered with greens. The candles may all be white or blue, or perhaps purple if purple paraments are used. The earlier practice of using three purple candles and one pink candle no longer reflects our calendar and lectionary. On the First Sunday in Advent, the first candle is lighted during the Psalm following the First Lesson. On the Second Sunday in Advent, the first candle is lighted prior to the service, and the second candle is lighted during the Psalm. An additional candle is thus lighted during each Sunday in Advent until all four are lighted.

Advent is a time for visual restraint and simplicity. It is appropriate to omit altar flowers during these weeks of preparation, in order to provide a marked contrast with the festivity of Christmas. When there are no flowers, vases are removed from the chancel.

Advent should not be confused with Christmas. Christmas decorations, such as a Christmas tree, should not appear during Advent.

Christmas

Christmas is the festive celebration of the Nativity of our Lord, the Word made flesh. This celebration lasts for twelve days—from Christmas Eve through Epiphany Eve.

The liturgical color for Christmas is white, symbolizing the light and purity of Christ and our great joy at his birth. White is used for the twelve days of Christmas, except for the festivals of St. Stephen (December 26) and of the Holy Innocents (December 28), when red is used in observance of their martyrdom.

Greens and wreaths may be placed in the nave and narthex,

and the chancel may be adorned with abundant poinsettias. Plants, however, are never placed on the altar itself, nor should it be obstructed by decorations. If there is sufficient room, a Christmas tree (never artificial) may be set up. The tree may be bare or decorated with white lights and chrismons. If lights are used, the tree should be made fireproof. Chrismons (taken from the word "Christ monograms") are symbols of Christ which may be made by the altar guild or other members of the parish. Decorations for Christmas should not be put up until after worship on the Fourth Sunday in Advent, because early decorating robs both Advent and Christmas of their full meaning.

Especially for Christmas Eve services, candles may be placed in windows of the nave and on the ends of pews as brilliant symbols of Christ, the Light of the world. If hand candles are distributed to worshipers, all fire safety precautions should be taken. For example, the altar guild should be certain that fire extinguishers are charged and readily accessible.

A Christmas creche may be placed near the altar, although it should not detract from the prominence of the altar itself. The figures may be carried in the entrance procession on Christmas Eve or Day and then placed in the creche. The figures of the magi should be reserved until Epiphany. During the season of Christmas, the magi may be placed on a window or table near the rear of the nave or in the narthex, as a reminder of their journey to Bethlehem and of the relationship between Christmas and Epiphany.

The altar guild needs to be prepared for large numbers of communicants at Christmas liturgies and should have adequate supplies of bread and wine on the offertory table or credence, and an ample number of purificators on the credence.

Epiphany

The Epiphany of our Lord is celebrated on January 6, marking the manifestation of Christ to the whole world. The coming of the magi to Bethlehem is reported in the gospel reading for this festival; this event may be made vivid by adding the figures of

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The second half of the church year is a more ordinary, nonfestival time. It is the season after Pentecost, known as the Time of the Church. This season begins with the Holy Trinity (First Sunday after Pentecost) and concludes with the festival of Christ the King (Last Sunday after Pentecost). During these weeks, the church concentrates on Christ's public ministry—his sermons, parables, and miracles. It is a time of growth in faith, hope, and love—and thus green paraments are used as a symbol of this growth.

Principal festivals of the church year are Easter Day, the Ascension of Our Lord, the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Trinity, Christmas Day, and the Epiphany of Our Lord. Interspersed throughout the year are lesser festivals, commemorations, days commemorating events in church history, and other occasions.

Advent

Advent consists of the four weeks before Christmas. The name of this first season of the liturgical year comes from a Latin word which means "coming." Advent focuses on this "coming" in three ways: Christ coming in the past as the baby at Bethlehem, Christ coming in the present in Word and Sacraments and in the fellowship of the church, and Christ coming again in the future at the end of time. In Advent we prepare for the celebration of Christ's coming in the incarnation, but more importantly we prepare for his second coming, when he will make all things new and judge the world in righteousness.

yourself. You may sense the presence of God when you recall your baptism, or at prayer, or in hearing the word of God. But few moments in life reach you as directly as does this weekly opportunity at the Lord's Supper.

What are you thinking as you receive the bread and wine, or when you return to your chair and listen to the choir and the organ, or, sometimes better, when you enjoy the silence broken only by the footfall of the communing people and the word "for you" spoken to each? What are you thinking as you join in the brief hymn to the LAMB OF GOD who "takes away the sin of the world"?

The act of communing takes but seconds, and participating in a congregational COMMUNION only a few minutes. Today, as so often before, you resolved to use the time to good advantage. Will you have done so? Admit it, some days your resolve goes as quickly as it came. You were going to concentrate on the "for you . . . for forgiveness." Instead your mind wandered, and you cannot later recall anything at all of what passed through it. Not a trace of ecstasy went with this personal moment in the meal. You were in the presence of God and, had it not been for the slight nervousness you felt going up to the front of an assembly, you might have stifled a yawn. You let some passing thing distract you. A scuff on the shoe of the minister. The smell of nicotine on a ministerial hand. The choir singing a bit flat, a jar to your musical sensibilities. A candle dripping on the new church carpet. Had you remembered to have that spot removed from the back of your coat? What will people think? Who donated those altar flowers? Will I get a raise this week?

Here you are, back in your seat. Should you feel guilty about having let the moment pass? Isn't it just human nature to have a wandering mind? You really don't believe the people who claim they can clear their heads and have pure and constant contact with God. There must be a lot of hypocrites here. Why did so little happen?

4. Reflections during Communion

The minutes of reflection during Communion do not allow time for developing a well-rounded theology. Indeed, they hardly suffice for sustaining a simple sequence of serious thought. But one can use this time, with or without some hymns or prayers, to place a few little mental levers on a few spiritual fulcrums, in order to lift them at other times, in other places. One might reflect, for example, on the feelings experienced, the forgiveness received, the presence promised, or the commitment entailed.

Experience

What am I supposed to feel? Am I *supposed* to feel? The whole idea of receiving forgiveness of sins implies recognizing how far you are from God and in how much need you stand. But what if you do not *feel* guilty or agonized?

You have to admit that different personality types will react variously. William James talked about "the sick soul" and "the healthy-minded" as psychological models. The sick soul will have no difficulty feeling in need of forgiveness. The trembling of a leaf has made hearts leap in fear from Leviticus to Luther to modern times. The whole universe seems then to be personified. It takes the form of the accusing finger of God. The victim of such sin-sickness may simply be working out some problem left over from a bad childhood. Parents placed too many restrictions on the conscience, and adult life became nothing more than a "Do I dare?" or "Someone is watching!" Such a person hesitates to take bold action, fearing the consequences.

scholarly talk about the function of rites and meals, and reflections on congregating, however, are not the chief thing. Only belief in the "for you" and "for the forgiveness of sins," accompanied by the bodily eating and drinking, is vital. Philosopher William James once urged readers to seek the "commanding vision" of an author so that everything else will fall into place. "For you . . . for forgiveness" is the commanding vision in this understanding of the Lord's Supper; everything else follows from it. Lose sight of it and the meal will become merely a nice rite. Einar Billing, a Swedish Christian leader, has suggested that we picture a system of Christian thought not as a collection of doctrines set like pearls on a string but as a glowing core, with everything else taking light and warmth from the center, like the rays from the sun. The glowing core of this meal is "for you . . . for forgiveness," and all the other rays emerge from it.

3. The Service

The ministers enter. They may be following a cross, which now is a sign above the bodies of the whole baptized congregation. Those who follow it signal their awareness that they have been reborn today. This cross represents the call to discipleship, to the fellowship of Christ's suffering. There may be some candle-lighting and movement by a choir. If there is a procession, it exists chiefly to help you separate your thinking from those reveries that went before and the distractions of a gray or jarringly busy world around you. The movement states that something special is going on here. But do not be fooled. That cross may be made of gold, but it should shock you as much as if they were wheeling into position an electric chair, a gallows, or a guillotine. Those candles may create glistening auras and halos; you remember how as a child you half shut your eyes and almost saw angelic light around them. But candles also pierced the darkness for ancient congregants back when the Christians worshiped in catacombs, or in your century when they needed a flaming wick to provide meager light over smuggled bread and wine in a concentration camp. Christians have often gathered for this meal in secret rooms, behind closed doors where a procession with trumpets would only have attracted the notice of the authorities. If these features underscore the "for you . . . for forgiveness," well and good; let them all be splendid. The week ahead will be drab enough.

Next everyone sings a hymn, perhaps a psalm. Adults may not join voices again all week, unless perhaps to

mumble their way through the national anthem at an athletic event. But this singing is different; that is clear from the very outset. The words of the ENTRANCE HYMN* itself reinforce the idea that what follows is to involve you in the blessing and praise of God. These lines then tell you about you more than do many mawkish spiritual songs which give God a full report on your passing emotions. "THE GRACE of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . be with you"—the "president" or minister up front speaks the greeting and you respond. The brief exchange between pastor and people is a serious conversation which implies a true partnership.

With Christians of all ages you soon find yourself praying the KYRIE prayers for the peace from above; clearly that peace is "for you." Then you ask for the peace of the world and the well-being of the church, though you may wince to think how little well-being and unity you have ever seen in the churches you have known. Lord have mercy! You find yourself joining in a song that takes its first measures from the angelic announcement on the night of Jesus's birth, "GLORY TO GOD in the highest, and peace to his people on earth." These words also lift far above the reportorial earthbound hymns, and they too tell you about you because they give glory to the God who sustains you. You may instead find yourself singing words that take off from the event of Easter, "the feast of victory for our God." These words remember the Lamb whose "blood set us free to be people of God." A congregation cannot get much closer in song to the commanding vision of "for you . . . for forgiveness." Nothing has happened yet this morning to cloud that vision with its glowing core. Even the PRAYER OF THE DAY spoken on this particular Sunday

*The capitalized words identify features of the liturgy in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*. Other evangelically catholic orders of service will be very similar.

maintains the focus. And you pray too, making the leader's words your own.

Then, whether in Eastern Europe or in North America, among the rich or the poor, the reverent or the distracted, on a Sunday morning in the late twentieth century you find yourself listening to three readings from scriptures that are two or three thousand years old. Because you hear LESSONS like these every week, you find it hard to understand how peculiar, even how shocking, this simple part of the Lord's Supper is. The church which provided the readings, the readers, and the listeners seems to assume that these stories, too, are "for you."

How can words "do" something? That they are indeed supposed to do something is suggested by the next line of the catechism paragraph we began quoting above (about the benefit "for you"): "By these words the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given to us in the sacrament, for where there is forgiveness of sins, there are also life and salvation." Not all the words in the ancient lessons we hear every week directly offer forgiveness. Some of them thunder the judgment of God and accuse the congregation; others are stories depicting forgiveness. But when they come to their overall point, they signal the activity of a God who works "for you," to make you new and acceptable. Words *do* this. For the congregation such words are not mere words; they become instruments, tools, agents.

The strangeness of this practice of reading from Scripture still haunts you. The words do not come from ancient Greek or Roman histories. The congregation is not a Shakespeare society that meets to dissect the playwright's terms and phrases, nor is it a Robert Burns Memorial Society that gathers to recall a poet. Neither is the congregation a collection of keepers of the city of the dead, people who come to hear about the way their club is a

custodian of burial plots, including one of a dead Christ. Rather these are stories from the people of Israel and the new people of God. They are told "for you," and thenceforth they become your story.

That a story can save, as can a meal, is remarkable, but we know very little about how and why stories save. As you did with the meal, ask what part stories play in ordinary life. When someone becomes important to you, you begin to tell each other the story of your life. To share with someone the story of your day makes you part of each other's ways. If you invest in a firm, you need to hear a narrative of the company's performance, even if this be in the lowly form of a comparative financial statement. In elementary school, children hear the story of their country; elders hope that it will attract the loyalty of a new generation. In a tribe, the young ones hear the myths that bind the people together. Not all these various kinds of stories can be stories "for you," but the biblical record is "for you." Because its commanding vision is the movement of God toward a historic people, not all its parts have to fit neatly together. The story unfolds among unlikely people in a world far away. Yet the believer does not stand *outside* the story. The Bible has a plot, and you are *in* it. At Holy Communion these ancient readings serve to help develop that plot and draw together the people in it. Those who hear will therefore have more in common at the subsequent meal. Without the story, they will forget, and that will make them less human. The story describes the action of God. It works faith. It heals. The Lord's Supper will make the words visible.

While you may have heard a number of different readers, some of whom were from the congregation, you now turn your attention to a minister who stands behind a book, reads from it, and, if you are fortunate, declares its truth "for you." If you are unfortunate, you will get a

book review, a comment on world affairs, some how-to advice for personal success, or some doctrinal comment about the word. A good homily or SERMON relentlessly plumbs a text and lets its depths reach you. It speaks to the baptized people of God, God's new people, or invites those present to join the baptized. Such a sermon points to the forthcoming meal. After a bad sermon the meal has to do the work all on its own.

In the Lord's Supper, the act of preaching adds to the general sense of strangeness. The preacher may use bad grammar and have some mannerisms that make you wish you had stayed in the back pew. Preachers themselves sometimes embody even bad ways of life, about which you know just enough to let yourself be distracted from what is being said. Some preachers' opinions may be shaky and their proclamations wrong. Preachers are fallible, but this meal is also for them and for their forgiveness, including forgiveness for sins they may demonstrate in the very act of preaching. And yet we call what they are doing "preaching the word of God." Insofar as they stick to the story of the mighty deeds of God, the love of God in Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit who is at work in presenting the story through the Scriptures, this is divine word.

For Martin Luther, the church is not a "feather house" for quill pens, like a secretarial office or a library; it is a "mouth house." The word is not so much *geschrieben* ("written") as it is *geschrieen* ("shouted"). In preaching, when the spoken word comes to the assembled congregation, something really happens—it does not *not* happen—God is present. Someone asks, "Have you met the Lord today?" "Yes," you say, "in the stumbling words of a laborious preacher." "Are you born again?" "Yes," you reply, "in response to this word that works faith in me, leading me to leave behind 'the old self.' "

The words of the Scripture readings and the sermon are great spellings-out of the very few words in the four narratives through which the Bible details the first Lord's Supper. We think of them as part of the response to a catechism question, "How can bodily eating and drinking produce such great effects?"

Be archaic for a moment and listen to the old-fashioned but startling answer: "The eating and drinking do not in themselves produce the effects, but the words 'for you' and 'for the forgiveness of sins.' *These words*, when accompanied by the bodily eating and drinking, are the chief thing in the sacrament, and he who believes *these words* has what they say and declare: the forgiveness of sins." Here are perfectly blended and held together the two basic features of the Christian sacrament—words and elements, both received in faith. To talk about which is prime or prior is idle at this point. Debating about whether the pulpit for preaching or the table for the Supper should have architectural dominance is futile. At the Lord's Supper they are put together, and no human should put them asunder. The HYMN OF THE DAY is a response and a reinforcement of both.

The person who believes has what the words offer. Faith or belief is still another integral element in the Lord's Supper. The congregants are to cling to the words in faith and to receive the bread and wine in faith. This means that they are to be serious people. God is making signs toward them. For them to fail to discern these signs and thus remain in unbelief is something for which they are held responsible. Jesus often berated people for their unbelief. This does not mean that he attacked atheists or agnostics. He did not spend time criticizing people of mediocre intelligence who could not spit back all the appropriate intellectual answers to the catechism questions of his day. The unbelievers he scolded were usually the religious people of the day who could not recognize how God was present in Christ. More often he chided his own disciples. Their unbelief led them to overlook the meaning of his words and his work among them, because they were constantly attempting to evade the cross and they wanted Jesus to escape it as well.

Unbelief would not let God be God. Unbelief would not let God choose to work through Jesus of Nazareth. Lack of faith was visible when people with empty lives tried to fill them with efforts to impress God: "Look, Lord, how'm I doing?" Jesus chose to praise faith among the simple folk who came to him, people who were not part of the historic people of God. These "little ones" were open to the healing he could give. These outsiders were the chief models for belief, as were the tax-collectors, prostitutes, and poor who had no place to go but to him for acceptance. Many of these outsiders became insiders. After his disciples saw Jesus risen from the dead, they too began to recognize him, especially "in the breaking of the bread." In the course of time the believers began to make a group response of faith, a CREED. Some of these responses were as short as "Jesus is Lord!"

In the course of centuries, certain formulas of faith developed, among them the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed. In formal worship today most Christians include one or the other in the Lord's Supper, though nothing like them was uttered in the upper room at the first such meal. More likely, especially if that first supper was a Passover meal, the disciples present heard stories instead of reciting creeds. But while believers do not regard these formulas as having dropped from heaven or as being necessary for Holy Communion, they take delight in "confessing" them. This means that the worshipers stand up and boldly speak before God, each other, and the world their faith in God. They give voice to their commanding vision.

In some service books the *Credo* ("I believe") of the

Nicene Creed is translated "we believe"—in order to bring out the way Jesus Christ exists *as* congregation. The plural formulation stresses how the members share one faith as the limbs share one body. The Apostles' Creed is more personal: "I believe. . . ." We should probably think "I" when saying "we," and think "we" when saying "I," for here as so often in the Holy Communion we have to hold together two ideas that could easily be in tension or even fall apart.

The "for you" of the Lord's Supper is spoken to the whole congregation of the faithful and to each member personally. As the early accounts tell it, Jesus did not interrupt the common meal which was uniting the people and say anything like, "Bartholomew, over there in the back corner, you have nothing in common with anyone else around. I saw your 'I Found It!' bumper sticker telling me that you had fulfilled your quest. You have been telling everyone that you have decided for me as your personal Savior. That's good, and to recognize that, let me leave the pack and break a piece of bread off 'for you.' Now you can go home." Nor did Jesus say, "I don't care much about persons. I came not to save the individual but to save the whole world. Mine is to be a mass movement, and such movements are made up of masses, not persons. If I have to stop for each one of you, how can I make the rounds of all? I have come to save humanity. It is humans I have no time for." Both statements are inconceivable. We moderns make too sharp a distinction between belief in and through a people and belief on one's own or doing one's own thing in one's own way. In the biblical sweep, God is always saving a people. Once, we hear, Israel was not a people, but now it is a people. Not to belong to a people was a great horror. And yet within that people very vivid personalities stood out. A modern novelist can take four verses or four chapters of the Old Testament and write four volumes of fiction based on them, as Thomas Mann did with the figure of Joseph. These ancient people were secure in their identity. As members of a people they knew who they were. They had more individuality than many people in the era of computers, people who go to extremes to have everything "custom-designed" and "personally styled" so that they can stand out.

The God who is saving a congregation also saves persons. The "for you" is for *each* of you, in your marvelous particularities. You, the alcoholic rising above your demon, and you, the suddenly unemployed mid-career executive. You, the proud parents of a newly baptized child, and you, the Peruvian peasant whose public life has seen none of the liberation that God would work among the people. You, the half-awake worshiper, and you, the alert one. You, the one who has doubts that this word and this meal will help overcome, and you who, having taken pains to think through all the dogma, sometimes think you know more about God than God does. Most of all, you who now gain confidence to express faith by reciting a creed full of astonishing statements like "We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." The moment you said those opening words, "We believe in one God," you set yourself up for those last words as well. Or is God to *stop* loving in the presence of death?

Neither creed in its articulation of faith uses directly the words that accompany the eating and drinking in the Lord's Supper, but all the words of both creeds address the commanding vision, the core of faith out of which all the rest flows. The Nicene Creed, especially when it speaks of Jesus Christ, becomes direct: "*For us* and for our salvation he came down from heaven; . . . *For our sake* he was crucified. . . . " On some days the congregation will

utter these words along with the act of baptism. On some days the people may not speak them at all. All life is to be an act of confession. Different words—in sermons, hymns, and prayers—can equally reinforce the response of a people.

If all members of a congregation can keep the "we" and the "I" of the creeds together, they will be prepared for those desperate moments when they will seem to be on their own. It has been said that just as one must believe for oneself, so one must die for oneself. Even if we are surrounded by our family and friends, our dying is the ultimately lonely act. Here the "for you" of personal faith is the strongest assurance of the divine presence. On such a day a messenger from the congregation may bring to you the food and drink of the Lord's Supper because you had to be away when the congregation gathered. This messenger will also bring words of encouragement and comfort. But there will also be a need for leave-taking. For that journey, this is the food; and to prepare for it, this faith is the road map. Yet it is also wrong to speak of our dying completely alone. Only Jesus had to utter a cry of abandonment, a shout that signaled how separated and alone he was. But God vindicated Jesus, and from that time on we die without being abandoned or alone. We die in company, as the Lord's Supper makes clear when it joins us with all who have gone before. We believe. I believe.

THE PRAYERS normally follow the creed. These can include intercessions. Intercession is loving your neighbor on your knees. While prayer for others was natural for those early Christians, or for the huddled faithful in Eastern Europe, at their best they took comfort in the fact that they were members of a church that went far beyond their own locale. So today the prayers are a place wherein Christians commit themselves to the good of the whole church and world, and their lives to action for the sake of that good.

Well into the Lord's Day, you suddenly detect a shift in the character of your observance. Despite all the talk about eating, up to this point it has been only that—talk. Up to this point you have heard descriptions, prescriptions, and recipes, though admittedly these give life in their own way. But a meal is an activity. And this week you decide to take special note of its movements. On one level, what follows is like a very slow dance, choreographed to match solemn moments. Behind much liturgy is the dance, a sign that people recognize how God wants us to enjoy the divine presence. The people have their steps to make, as do their leaders. Everything is studied and still graceful. God works through our gestures as God works through our words; we are asked to yield our bodies, and here is a chance to do just that.

In a pattern that recalls the earliest Communion, the minister offers the PEACE to the people. Then they may share it with each other. The former peace is spoken and embarrasses no one; it is easy to let it slide by unheard. The latter is gestured, and either upsets or thrills most people. The passing of the peace can take the pattern of rather formal hand greetings or more personal embraces. With it people speak a formula such as "the peace of Christ be with you" or some personally applied words of greeting. A member near you is just back from the hospital; surely you will mention that in the peace, as the minister does in the prayer. Whatever occurs between members, it should be as natural as possible, in order to recall the living-room character of early Christian worship, and not be so compulsive as to disrupt the flow and tone of the whole service.

Why does something that calls for motion of the body elicit every kind of sarcasm and ribaldry from nervous Christians? The New Testament writings are emphatic about the exchange of greetings and kisses of peace among believers. Yet when in the twentieth century conservative

liturgists set out to reach further back in the tradition to restore what later ages forgot, traditionalists began to sniff and snort in reaction against such "modern" tamperings. They resorted to every kind of colorful and putting-off phrase in order to attack the idea that Christian people should pass the peace of Christ to each other. You know, of course, that it is important to respect individual differences, and you need not expect the same kind of enthusiasm from everyone. But once you saw how the gestures of peace embodied a sense of the "for you" of the Lord's Supper, how they brought people into a vivid sense of union, you began to overcome your own reserve and to bear the burdens and share the joys of others. The peace is not the chief thing in the sacrament, by any means. Nor is it necessary for guests to greet one another when they come together for a meal in someone's house. They will receive the same number of calories with or without greetings.

While the whole motion of the Lord's Supper is toward you, it also includes pledges in return, called responses. These come to a climax in an OFFERTORY. Long ago, at the first Lord's Supper, Jesus and the disciples made provision for the meal itself. Today people offer not only bread and wine but other gifts which they want to give to God for God's work. Evangelical Christians once necessarily fought off the idea that the Lord's Supper was an achievement of their own. They dared not let it be a sacrifice designed to impress God, to tie God down to various obligations. They therefore began to underplay and even to negate responses. All the figurative arrows symbolizing direction came from heaven above to the earthly table, and from the sacred table to the sinful people.

If somewhere in the Christian world rearguard actions in that battle are still necessary, let the people beware of the Offertory. But battle lines change through the centuries.

One critic said he had gone to many churches and heard the preacher say, "Don't try to impress God with your works" or "Don't attempt to please God with your merits" or "Don't try to keep the rules and regulations and thus win your way." He looked around at nearly slumbering collections of utterly casual Christians and wondered, "Who's trying?"

The privilege of offering bread and wine, which are human reworkings of the divine gifts, and of bringing money to stand for other forms of earthly goods, is far too rich to be pushed aside because some people somewhere might think they are thereby trying to please God. You once asked yourself which was your greater temptation, to be compulsive about appeasing a God who would otherwise snuff out your existence, or to stir yourself up to do anything at all about the calls of God, and you decided that during your lifetime, response needed your major energies. And so today again you joined the great company of makers of bread and wine and money who through the centuries have helped provide for this meal and for the works of God associated with it. You were glad to see that the family that brought forth the bread and wine today were new members for whom this act took on special importance. The offerings are needed—by the people who make them. Though the Lord's Supper is complete in its motion "for you," a response from you seals it.

During the offering, you have a chance to think about the bread and wine while the ministers prepare for the eucharist. Through the ages people have debated these simple gifts. The early church gave no prescription beyond the word *bread* and the word *wine*. It is probably best to stay relaxed about that simplicity. If the original meal was a Passover feast recalling the flight of the children of Israel from Egypt, the bread would lack leaven. Since Passover

occurred in the spring, the wine by definition and chemical inevitability would have been fermented. But God can work through leavened or unleavened bread, and the wine could have been red or white. The idea of breaking one loaf preserves the biblical impulse best, as does sharing from one cup: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor. 10:16–17). If people find it more convenient to use many little bits of bread and many little cups, some of the pictorial element disappears, but the gift is still there. The picture then takes some explaining, just as Christians who in baptizing do not immerse people then have to draw verbal pictures in order to place proper emphasis on how baptism is a "burial" with Christ. You yourself found it more vivid when your congregation returned to the biblical custom of breaking one loaf and sharing one cup, but you didn't regard those who used other forms as weaker brothers and sisters. In fact, the more you thought about this debate, the less you thought about the character of bread and wine as such.

Someone has said that for the material side of the Christian faith, all you need are "a loaf of bread, a bottle of wine, and a river." Some people become nervous when you remind them that in this respect Christianity is a very material faith. They look for something spiritual and angelic, untouched and untainted by anything visible and earthly. You have perhaps seen advertisements for poultry which boast that the chickens "never touch the ground"; they spend their whole antiseptic lives suspended in little cages, as if contact with mother earth would make them less valuable. Some Christians have turned their back on God's creation so much that they like to think of their faith as never touching the ground. The Letter to the Hebrews had to warn against that attitude (2:16ff.): "For surely it is not with angels that Christ is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect. . . . " The very material bread and wine come from the world of Christ's brothers and sisters, with whom he is concerned.

The chief thing in the sacrament is not a mysticism about natural elements. The use of bread and wine is not designed to lead you to a Walden Pond or an Orange County ravine, where you might commune with nature and thus become most intimate with God. This is not a festival of bread and wine as such. But why should anyone be nervous about connecting these gifts of earth, these nature gifts which are "for you," with the gifts of the eternal, the more than natural gifts which are "for you" as well? You resolve after today never again to look at a field of grain or a slope of grapes the casual way you did before. God is working through them and through the people who work with them. What comes from those very fields and vines might end up on the Lord's Table. Even if it does not, it can work to the purposes of God in other ways. You also resolve never to look again the same old way at the bread and wine of your own table. Why take for granted elements which God can use to make Christ present among us?

An old German Christmas chorale included these lines:

> Tell abroad His goodness proudly,
> Who our race hath honored thus,
> That He deigns to dwell with us. . . .

Similarly, after this day you can tell abroad God's goodness proudly. He honored the earth by making use of its produce to dwell with us. Angels can fit in the plot somewhere, as can untainted and unstained realms of being. But the Lord's Supper brings us a Christ *along with*

hour. You care about the way the Holy Spirit is called for and comes with this gathering, with this bread and wine of a sacred meal. Who could ask anything more than this kind of awesome intimacy? "Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, the spirit of our Lord and of his resurrection, that we who receive the Lord's body and blood may live to the praise of your glory and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light." This meal is to become effective in your life, and for that the Holy Spirit must be the agent. "Amen. Come, Holy Spirit." With the answer to this prayer in the form of the coming of the Holy Spirit, you have to be ready for a changed life. Your body, the one that will soon receive the gift of God in the eating of this meal, is also a temple of the Holy Spirit. Take care of it. Take care.

You do not have much time to think during the last few lines of the Great Thanksgiving, but you try today, as you have tried before, to let your imagination soar as you hear: "Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place. . . . " The grand prayer of blessing over the bread and the cup is also a way of affirming the whole church. Those servants of every time and place include a vast and diverse company but also some very specific persons known well to you. Not only the huddled East Europeans, the charismatic Christians of Chile, the disciples in the upper room, the smugglers of bread and wine into concentration camps, but also your father in a nursing home, those new parents just two pews ahead, the people being baptized today who will share this table for the first time, and . . . you, you sinner. You, you servant. You, you saint. Sensing the breadth and the depth, you find it easy to utter a doxology, a song of praise to the Holy Trinity: "Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever."

During this doxology the minister ordinarily lifts the bread and the cup, even holds them high. Call Martin Luther in to explain why:

> It signifies that Christ has commanded us to remember him. For just as the sacrament is bodily elevated, and yet Christ's body and blood are not seen in it, so he is also remembered and elevated by the word of the sermon and is confessed and adored in the reception of the sacrament. In each case he is apprehended only by faith; for we cannot see how Christ gives his body and blood for us and even now daily shows and offers it before God to obtain grace for us.

You have never heard those words before, but they do set off a chain of reflections about the presence of Christ. You postpone such reflection until the time for Communion, when you do not want to have an idle mind.

Suddenly you are praying your table prayer for the meal. It is not "God is great, God is good," "Come, Lord Jesus," "The eyes of all wait upon thee," or any of the other table graces you use at home. Instead you join in praying THE LORD'S PRAYER, the "Our Father" that Christ taught his people. The meal follows.

Just as Jesus, being a Jew at a special dinner, would have taken some bread and wine before he passed or carried it to others, so the minister takes some or receives it from one of the Communion assistants, and then the congregation participates. Your turn comes and you hear, "The body of Christ, given for you. . . . The blood of Christ shed for you." "For you": The plural is singular now. It is into your hand that the minister places the bread, and it is your mouth that receives the cup. You do not stop being a member of the congregation—no act besides this brings you closer to others—but just as you must die for yourself, you must also believe for yourself and receive for

You listen closely today as the minister leads you in the eucharistic prayer. The praise of the Father for the great gift of Jesus and for this meal continues. You keep alive an awareness of all creation, that creation from which comes the bread and wine on which you depend and through which the presence of God is known today. In this prayer you recall the sense of story, remembering how bound up with faith is the narrative about Abraham, Israel, the prophets. Your prayer comes to its climax when you thank God for sending the Son. All this is a Christian reenactment of the praises and blessings that Jesus spoke in the words of institution when he gave thanks over the bread he broke and the cup he shared. The Holy Spirit, who "calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church" is God in action. This Spirit makes the "thrice holy" present in the here and now. You do not think of this remembrance of Christ as the annual meeting of a burial society. Neither is this narrative only a historical record about people of old. The Great Thanksgiving surrounds the present-making power of God. After this you find no need to go out hunting for ways to meet the Lord or to have an experience of God by your private enterprise, mental tricks, or the climbing of mystical ladders. This prayer celebrates the way God is with you and the congregation. It takes some act of energy and imagination now to deny God, to turn your back on the presence.

In this context, you now hear the words of institution exactly as you did years before, with startling clarity. But now the pressure is off them. You no longer find yourself wondering what kind of change is occurring during a ministerial sign of the cross over bread and wine. This prayer adds a word of Paul that connects your celebration with the people who do not yet share the presence: "For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." The congregation then erupts with three shouts in three tenses: "Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again."

Because the idea of mere remembrance is too weak to sustain the presence of God, it is easy to forget the specific command of Jesus to share this act "for the remembrance of me." So the Great Thanksgiving picks up the idea of remembering and brings it into focus. "With this bread and cup we remember the life our Lord offered for us." He has come with this bread and cup, and now we remember him with it. The former use is instrumental: Christ makes an agent of bread and wine. He uses it to come to your midst. God comes with it "for you . . . for forgiveness." You then naturally look ahead, as Jesus did, toward another kind of reunion with him. "Believing the witness of his resurrection," you reborn people "await his coming in power to share with us the great and promised feast." You respond with early Christians: "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus." One side of your mind does not want the end of human history to come so soon. You want to see your children grow to maturity. You have a friendly meal with neighbors planned for late afternoon. You love this world since you have come to know its natural wonders. But "Come, Lord Jesus" reminds you that the Lord of history has more in store for you than stretched-out rainy Sunday afternoons, the treadmill, the rat race, one thing after another, and otherwise purposeless existence.

The Great Thanksgiving closes with a call for the Holy Spirit to be present. Today you hear much about the presence of the Holy Spirit. A charismatic or pentecostal movement in the churches, including your church, is making special efforts to realize and claim this presence. You personally may have not been attracted to the movement, though you welcome some of the vitalities it brings wherever it does not divide congregations and make second-class Christians of those who do not join it. But the charismatics are not in the forefront of your mind at this

making a heavy investment in the words of institution without offering much of a positive understanding of the Lord's Supper. Never could you be content to hold to a view that was halfway between everyone else's without having much to say about your own position. Those old teachers of "our people," let it be said, were not all wrong. Medieval Roman Catholics were inclined to almost magical views, and even after the Reformation period Catholics did set down hard-line notions about how the substance of bread and wine changed. It was true that many of their devotions treated these substances as if they had supernatural curative powers. Popular piety may still do so. But contemporary statements of Roman Catholic faith about the sacramental presence of Christ are vastly different from those earlier approaches, and it is unfair to misrepresent the living faith of Catholic Christians today. Your theologians regularly sit down with them nowadays to discuss this presence of Christ, and the two parties cannot find any real differences between them. Maybe it is no fun for Christian factions to stop fighting. Certainly it is difficult to understand the Lord's Supper now, if formerly you depended on having an enemy position nearby to serve as a boundary against which you could prop up your own definition. But growth in the unity of the church of Christ more than compensates for those emotional losses.

On the other side, the so-called left side of the argument, it is not at all clear that everyone even in those days believed that bread and wine were *mere* bread and wine and that Jesus was *not* present in this meal except in the pious minds of the worshipers. In the religious battles of the sixteenth century both sides of the Protestant debate exaggerated the differences and misrepresented alternative views. This is not to say that there were not and are not differences. "Your" theologians have not been as confident about coming to early agreement with non-Catholic

Christianity about the Lord's Supper. But if Reformed Christianity still speaks often of the bread and wine as "symbols" of the body and blood, clearly the concept of symbol is changing. You are less likely to hear the elements spoken of as "mere" symbols, and whenever the word *mere* disappears, there is motion toward a new understanding. In any case, it is harder than it was four centuries ago for you to define your Lord's Supper when the people you were taught to call the enemy on the left change position.

The Great Thanksgiving or eucharistic prayer is a way of helping congregations come to a more positive and more fully biblical understanding of what went on in the first Lord's Supper. To say that at the Lord's Supper you should hear the bare words of institution because the Bible reports only on them, and because this economy will make your mass closer to the mass of Christ, is false. Jesus did in fact say prayers and blessings at that meal—we are confident of that, as confident as we can be of anything else about early Christian faith and worship. At the time of the Reformation, church leaders cut back on much of what they might have thought Jesus had said and done because in their time the eucharistic prayer had come to be locked in to what was called the canon of the mass. And that meant it was linked to some ideas that were almost magical and to other ideas that suggested Christians were bringing sacrifices to please God. The Reformers could tolerate neither idea, so they swept the chancel clean by throwing out the whole eucharistic prayer.

Not having to fight their battle, at least not in their way, Christians today are free to recover the larger biblical set of meanings. To continue to deprive you and your fellow worshipers of these meanings by reading only the words of institution is to preserve an unfair and very modern (sixteenth-century) approach in place of the more ancient, conservative, and biblical (first-century) one.

elements that come from a natural order that allows for rust in grain and rancidity in wine. Christ and creation go together better than you thought.

A PRAYER and an exchange called THE PREFACE follow the offering. By preserving this exchange through the years, the church helped you retain some tone of praise before the meal: "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give him thanks and praise." And the SANCTUS, or "Holy, Holy, Holy" helped. You could picture Isaiah in the temple, having a vision of God. That helped bring a sense of the presence of God to your church. You could also hear in its "Hosanna" the shouts of the people who greeted Jesus on Palm Sunday when he entered Jerusalem. That lifted the service above the dreary and the ordinary. God, the "thrice holy," is present here.

Now in the GREAT THANKSGIVING you are able to sustain this note of presence, this spirit of awe and praise through the whole celebration. Some churches call this extended prayer "the eucharistic prayer." You recall how church leaders have only recently begun to recover the wider understandings of the biblical meal. There was once a time for only "the words of institution," that stark and bare running-together of the New Testament sayings of Jesus in the upper room. Some weeks the ministers may still read only those words. You get the feeling that, when they do, it is because everyone is in a hurry, though there may be other good reasons to read only them from time to time.

You remember how as a child, back before your feet touched the church floor and before you could sit a full hour and a quarter, your parents would bring you to church on "Communion Sunday." You would hear these words of institution but not quite understand what was going on. If you recall correctly, it seemed as if everyone became very sad at this point in the service. That emotion

was not completely out of place, because the words themselves do say that Jesus spoke them "in the night in which he was betrayed." It was then and is now a serious business to follow Jesus on his journey to the cross, and you have never quite come to terms with some of the "mod" liturgies that set out to celebrate but instead produce chiefly giddiness. So you do not want to make fun of the grimness of the old-style Communion. But something was missing in the overall attitude.

Some years later you went to confirmation instruction and started learning more about the meaning of the Lord's Supper. Most of this instruction concerned itself with the words of institution. You knew *something* happened when the minister spoke them, but what? You watched the sign of the cross being made over the bread as you heard "This is my body," and over the cup during "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." *That* must have been the moment when "it" happened; but, still, what was *it*? You puzzled everything out in a negative way. Adults told you, in effect, that our people believed less than did the people on the Christian right and more than the people on our left. On our right were Roman Catholics who, you were told, held to a purely magical concept. They said that at this moment the bread and wine changed into the body and blood of Jesus, even though they kept on looking like the same bread and wine. On our left were the Reformed and the Baptists who had a purely humanistic approach. These Christians said that at this moment nothing happened to the bread and wine. The Lord's Supper was simply a memorial feast, done "in remembrance of Jesus." The bread and wine were merely symbols that pious people used in order to focus their minds on God.

You may have gotten it all wrong while everyone else got it right—one can never be sure about a child's grasp of difficult subjects. Maybe the issues seemed difficult only to you. But for all your questioning, you did find the church

Thanksgiving. Real bread rather than wafers may be used, as a reminder that God uses the fruits of the earth for God's gracious purposes.

Christ the King

The last Sunday after Pentecost celebrates the kingship of Christ and is so named. The liturgical color is white.

12
Organization

To be effective servants of the liturgy, an altar guild needs to be organized in a way that facilitates its work. Criteria for membership and principles of organization are established by the pastor and the parish worship committee, and are approved by the church council. A sample constitution is included in appendix B of this book.

Membership

An important qualification for all members of the altar guild is a sense of awe in the presence of the Holy God. This awe gives rise to the spirit of reverence that is so essential to the altar guild's work. The ministry of liturgical preparations is a high privilege for a Christian, and dedicated altar guild members will carry out their responsibilities with awe, joy, gratitude, and love for their Lord. Tasks of the altar guild are not a burden but a delight, not a duty but a high privilege. There is no room in the altar guild for complaining or grumbling. If the work cannot be done with joy and a sense of privilege, a replacement should be sought.

Another important characteristic is humility. While it is necessary for altar guild members to be skilled in various ways, each member is only one among many servants of the liturgy. The privilege of serving God is shared with other altar guild

Thanksgiving. Real bread rather than wafers may be used, as a reminder that God uses the fruits of the earth for God's gracious purposes.

Christ the King

The last Sunday after Pentecost celebrates the kingship of Christ and is so named. The liturgical color is white.

12

Organization

To be effective servants of the liturgy, an altar guild needs to be organized in a way that facilitates its work. Criteria for membership and principles of organization are established by the pastor and the parish worship committee, and are approved by the church council. A sample constitution is included in appendix B of this book.

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THE PLASTER SAINT

A very wise piece of advice, which St. Benedict gives to monks in his Rule, is that they should not desire to be called saints before they are holy, but that they should first become saints in order that their reputation for holiness may be based on reality. This brings out the great difference between real spiritual perfection and man's idea of perfection. Or perhaps one might say, more accurately, the difference between sanctity and narcissism.

The popular idea of a "saint" is, of course, quite naturally based on the sanctity which is presented for our veneration, in heroic men and women, by the Church. There is nothing surprising in the fact that the saints quickly become stereotyped in the mind of the average Christian, and everyone, on reflection, will easily admit that the stereotype tends to be unreal. The conventions of hagiography have usually accentuated the unreality of the picture, and pious art has, in most cases, successfully completed the work. In this way, the Christian who devotes himself to the pursuit of holiness unconsciously tends to reproduce in himself some features of the popular stereotyped image. Or rather, since it is fortunately difficult to succeed in this enterprise, he imagines himself in some sense obliged to follow the pattern, as if it were really a model proposed for his imitation by the Church herself, instead of a purely conventional and popular caricature of a mysterious reality—the Christlikeness of the saints.

The stereotyped image is easy to sketch out here: it is essentially an image without the slightest moral flaw. The

saint, if he ever sinned at all, eventually became impeccable after a perfect conversion. Impeccability not being quite enough, he is raised beyond the faintest possibility of feeling temptation. Of course he is tempted, but temptation provides no difficulties. He always has the absolute and heroic answer. He flings himself into fire, ice water or briers rather than even face a remote occasion of sin. His intentions are always the noblest. His words are always the most edifying clichés, fitting the situation with a devastating obviousness that silences even the thought of dialogue. Indeed, the "perfect" in this fearsome sense are elevated above the necessity or even the capacity for a fully human dialogue with their fellow men. They are without humor as they are without wonder, without feeling and without interest in the common affairs of mankind. Yet of course they always rush to the scene with the precise act of virtue called for by every situation. They are always there kissing the leper's sores at the very moment when the king and his noble attendants come around the corner and stop in their tracks, mute in admiration.

There is no one who will not smile at the naïve beginner who trustingly embarks upon the reproduction of this kind of image in his life. He will always be told to face reality; yet when he is reminded of the sorry facts of life, do we not often assume, secretly, that he is, after all, right? Sanctity is indeed a cult of the *absolute*. It is intransigent, and does not even consider compromise. Do we not really, in our hearts, mean by this that the miracle of sanctity is somehow not only supernatural but even inhuman? Do we not, as a matter of fact, equate the supernatural with a flat denial of the human? Are not nature and grace diametrically opposed? Does not sanctity mean the absolute rejection and renunciation of all that accords with nature?

If we think this, we are in practice admitting the reality of the stereotyped image, and in that case we have no

alternative than to assume that this is the model that is supposed to be realized by the perfect Christian. By what right, then, do we dissuade people from seeking to realize what is in all truth their model?

The fact is that our concept of sanctity is ambiguous and obscure, and this is perhaps because our concept of grace and the supernatural is itself confused. The adage that grace "builds on nature" is by no means a cliché that was devised to excuse half measures in the spiritual life. It is the strict truth, and until we realize that before a man can become a saint he must first of all be a *man* in all the humanity and fragility of man's actual condition, we will never be able to understand the meaning of the word "saint." Not only were all the saints perfectly human, not only did their sanctity enrich and deepen their humanity, but the Holiest of all the Saints, the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, was himself the most deeply and perfectly human being who ever lived on the face of the earth. We must remember that human nature was, in him, quite perfect, and at the same time completely like our own frail and suffering nature in all things except sin. Now what is the "supernatural" if not the economy of our salvation in and through the Incarnate Word?

If we are to be "perfect" as Christ is perfect, we must strive to be as perfectly human as he, in order that he may unite us with his divine being and share with us his sonship of the heavenly Father. Hence sanctity is not a matter of being *less* human, but *more* human than other men. This implies a greater capacity for concern, for suffering, for understanding, for sympathy, and also for humor, for joy, for appreciation of the good and beautiful things of life. It follows that a pretended "way of perfection" that simply destroys or frustrates human values precisely because they are human, and in order to set oneself apart from the rest of men as an object of wonder, is doomed to be nothing but a caricature. And such caricaturing of sanctity is indeed a sin against faith in the

Incarnation. It shows contempt for the humanity for which Christ did not hesitate to die on the cross.

However, we must be careful not to confuse genuinely human values with the rather less than human values that come to be accepted in a disordered society. In actual fact, we are suffering more from the distortion and underdevelopment of our deepest human tendencies than from a superabundance of animal instincts. That is why the stern asceticism that was devised to control violent passions may do more harm than good when it is applied to a person whose emotions have never properly matured and whose instinctual life is suffering from weakness and disorder.

We must reflect more deeply than we do on the effect of modern technological life upon the emotional and instinctual development of man. It is quite possible that the person whose life is divided between tending a machine and watching TV is sooner or later going to suffer a radical deprivation in his nature and humanity.

Holiness presupposes not only a normal human intelligence, properly developed and formed by Christian education, a normal human will, a trained liberty capable of self-commitment and self-oblation, but even before all this it presupposes sound and ordered human emotions. Grace builds on nature not by suppressing instinct but by healing and elevating it to a spiritual level. There must always be a proper place for healthy, instinctive spontaneity in the Christian life. The emotions and instincts of man were at work in the sacred humanity of Christ Our Lord: He showed in all things a sensitive and warmly responsive humanness. The Christian who wants to imitate his Master must learn to do so not by imposing a crude and violent control on his emotions (and in most cases his efforts to do so will be a failure) but by letting grace form and develop his emotional life in the service of charity.

Jesus asked the Pharisees: "How can you believe, who

seek glory one from another?" (Jn. 5:44). To seek a heroicity of virtue that will give us glory in the eyes of other men is in reality to weaken our faith. The true saint is not one who has become convinced that he himself is holy, but one who is overwhelmed by the realization that God, and God alone, is holy. He is so awe-struck with the reality of the divine holiness that he begins to see it everywhere. Eventually, he may be able to see it in himself too: but surely he will see it there last of all, because in himself he will continue to experience the nothingness, the pseudo reality of egoism and sin. Yet even in the darkness of our disposition to evil shines the presence and the mercy of the divine Saviour. The saint is capable, as Dostoievsky said, of loving others even in their sin. For what he sees in all things and in all men is the object of the divine compassion.

The saint, then, seeks not his own glory but the glory of God. And in order that God may be glorified in all things, the saint wishes himself to be nothing but a pure instrument of the divine will. He wants himself to be simply a window through which God's mercy shines on the world. And for this he strives to be holy. He strives to practice virtue heroically, not in order to be known as a virtuous and holy man, but in order that the goodness of God may never be obscured by any selfish act of his.

Hence it is that he who loves God, and seeks the glory of God, seeks to become, by God's grace, perfect in love, as the "heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 5:48).

IDEAS AND REALITY

It is always a little foolish to try to set down, in a few clear formulas, the essence of Christian perfection. Sometimes this has to be done. But whenever we try to do it, we must remind ourselves that we do not grasp the meaning of the words right away, and we must take steps to avoid creating the impression that sanctity can be easily achieved by following some simple formula. "Becoming a saint" is not just a matter of picking out a suitable recipe and cooking up the various ingredients of the Christian life according to a formula which pleases our own taste. Yet this is what some spiritual books would sometimes seem to do. And there are always those "holy souls" who have discovered a new method, which sums it all up, and which will henceforth make the whole thing very simple for everyone.

It is of course natural to look for a simple method of solving all spiritual problems. Traditionally, the most fundamental question a man can ask is "What must we do?" (Acts 2:37). The Christian answer, "Repent, be baptized, . . . to have your sins forgiven; then you will receive the Holy Spirit" (38), is not the exposition of a "method" or a technique. On the contrary, what St. Peter was thus telling the hearers of his first sermon on the first Pentecost, was that salvation did not consist in following a method so much as in becoming a member of the People of God, the Body of Christ, and living as a member of that Body, with the life of that People, which is a life of love. But love in this context is not simply a question of affectivity and benign interior dispositions.

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Mark Brooks

John Foust
Susan Lowe
Vickie Lovelady
Dennis Luft

7

The Scriptural Qualifications of Deacons

The qualifications of a deacon may be drawn from two passages in the New Testament. The establishment of the ministry of deacons as recorded in Acts chapter six provides a partial list of qualifications for this office.

> *But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. (Acts 6:3)*

The deacon, like the elder, must be a man with a good reputation not only in the church but in the community as well. The duties of his office call for the highest level of confidence. As a very important lay leader the deacon should have the trust of the membership.

The apostles agreed that the deacons selected from the fellowship should be Spirit-filled men. Though their ministry was largely the administration of material things, Spirit-filled men were essential for the oversight of this task. The work assigned the deacons was an integral part of the church's overall ministry.

No dichotomy exists between the spiritual and the material ministries of the church. The deacons elected to wait tables in the household of faith are as much in need of the fulness of the Holy Spirit as the elders who minister the Word.

The infilling of the Holy Spirit is just as essential for service as He is for holy living. Christians so often experience futility in their efforts at service in most instances because of the absence of anointing for service. The norm for every Christian is to be Spirit-filled.

The third characteristic of good deacons given by the apostles was wisdom. The deacon was assigned to an important task

requiring him not only to serve himself but to enlist and oversee others in the accomplishment of the task. The deacons were called upon frequently to make decisions and to deal with the problems of people. The deacon must be wise in the sense that he has developed the skill of applying his knowledge in a given situation. He should be a man of good judgment.

As the church grew and spread beyond Palestine to the Gentiles the office of deacon became more important in the life of the church. When Paul instructed Timothy in matters of church order he advised him to have deacons in the churches. Paul's instructions included a guideline of qualifications to assure spiritual leadership in the office of deacon comparable to the standards for the office of elder.

> *Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.*
>
> *And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. . . .*
>
> *Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.*
>
> *For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12-13)*

The similarities as well as the differences of the qualifications of deacons to that of elders are important. Three qualities of a deacon are exactly like the qualities of eldership.

The deacon's home life is very important. He must have a solid marriage that meets scriptural standards. He must also have a well-ordered home. His children should reflect in their conduct the Christian atmosphere of the home. The support of a godly wife is certainly implied in this passage.

With the widespread need to strengthen the family this requisite for leadership should not be taken lightly by any church.

The deacon like the elder is not to be addicted to wine. The collective judgment of our fellowship from its inception until now is that believers should not use any form of alcoholic beverages. Since alcoholism is now the most threatening form

of drug abuse in western society the Christian community must refrain all the more from the use of alcoholic beverages. The deacons and the elders must provide a wholesome example by their own abstinence.

The financial practices of a candidate for the office of deacon ought not to be overlooked. The scriptures say that he is not to "be fond of sordid gain." The word *sordid* infers a shameful or dishonest gain. When one's love for money and material things is so overpowering that he is willing to compromise Christian principles to get money he is not qualified for church leadership. The deacon like the elder should be above reproach in financial matters. He should have a Spirit-given capacity to use his possessions as a stewardship for the glory of Christ. The way a man handles money is the key to his whole value system. An officer of the church who has responsibility for an important share of the finances should have a deep commitment to the values set forth in the gospel. He not only has responsibility to account for the fund, but he must by his own attitude toward money lead the church to the sanctified management of its resources.

Paul speaks not only of the characteristics of deacons that are similar to those of the elders, but he adds some characteristics not found in the list for elders. Paul advises Timothy that men of dignity should be selected for the *diaconate*. The image of the deacon should be one that commands respect. A deacon must deal with all kinds and all ages of people in the course of his duties. As a servant of Christ his bearing should enable him to minister to all.

The idea of dignity is somewhat tarnished in modern culture. So many leaders in high places have failed that cynicism has taken over in the populous. The unfortunate result of this situation is the immortalization of the undignified. The church is obligated to counter such fuzzy thinking and reassert the credibility of dignity. It is needed in the home, in the government, and in the church. Holy Spirit-implanted dignity is a quality of Christian character.

The person selected to serve as a deacon should be in control not only of his walk but also of his talk. In this ministry the deacon will be in constant contact with people in their homes, making him aware of problems that should never be discussed outside one's secret prayer closet. Careless talk damages the

work and the reputation of fellow believers. It is significant that this quality be singled out and emphasized in the instruction for deacons, and that he be encouraged to strictly adhere to this. It is a quality that should be emulated by elders and by every Christian. It is especially important that deacons avoid a double-tongue (1 Tim. 3:8). The Greek word translated *double-tongue* carries the connotation of talebearing. The seriousness of this sin can be more readily understood by comparing Proverbs 11:13 with 1 Timothy 3:8:

He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy conceals a matter. (Prov. 11:13)

Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain. (1 Tim. 3:8)

The control of the tongue is a necessity to the deacon's ministry of compassion and understanding. Only the trustworthy can visit from house to house and enjoy the high privilege of such direct exposure to the weaknesses and faults of the saints. The deacon, and for that matter any leader, can minister only to those who trust him.

The office of deacon requires not only qualities of Christian character; it also requires a deep knowledge of the things of God. Paul says,

But holding to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience. (1 Tim. 3:9)

The mystery of faith speaks of an objective faith, the content of faith. These servants of the church must have more than an ordinary understanding of that body of truth which constitutes the gospel. Deacons should be men who know and love the Word of God. The great doctrines of the Bible are their spiritual sustenance. Deacons are to minister truth with compassion.

This office, like that of the elder, is not for the novice; it requires maturity. Paul instructed Timothy that deacons were to be "tested."

And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. (1 Tim. 3:10)

Paul's use of the present imperative suggests that the testing of the man should be over a period of time. Some have erroneously concluded that deacons should have a probation period after their election to office. Paul is not suggesting a probation; he is calling for care in the selection of the deacons. Only those who have proven themselves should be considered for the office. R. C. H. Lenski, a Lutheran scholar, supports this position by calling attention to the kind of men selected in Acts six for the *diaconate*. They were tried and proven men, selected from the very best to serve as deacons.

The office of deacon should never be used as a ploy to entice some inactive member into ministry. The deacons are to come from those already active in ministry.

For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 3:13)

A distinction must be made in this verse between the technical and non-technical use of the word *deacon*. Paul is saying that those selected for the office of deacon should be men who have already served the church well by their unofficial ministry. Faithful service is the most likely way for a promising leader to come to the attention of his brethren. The New International Version seems a better translation of this verse.

Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 3:13—NIV)

The practice of translating the participle *oi diakonasantes* as the work of a deacon comes from the Episcopal approach to the office of deacon. They follow Catholic tradition which looked upon the *diaconate* as a step in the ranks of the clergy: Men are first ordained deacons and then priests and then bishops. While it is true both from scripture and tradition that some deacons entered the ministry or became elders the Episcopal system can

hardly be justified either from this scripture or the church's experience.

Paul is here discussing the qualifications of a good deacon. Paul's concern is that the church select men who have already proven themselves in fruitful ministry. The apostle hastens to explain that active laymen are acquiring a good standing and great boldness in their faith. Spiritual growth for them is the by-product of dedicated ministry.

Deaconesses

No consideration of this passage would be complete without a careful interpretation of 1 Timothy 3:11:

> *Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.*

The use of *women* rather then *wives* indicates that among those serving in the church's ministry of compassion were women or deaconesses. While the New Testament does not mention an office of deaconess, this verse along with Romans 16:1 and 1 Timothy 5:9-10 indicate that women had a definite ministry in the early church.

Four qualifications are given for those women who serve the church as deaconesses. They are essentially the same qualifications as those required of deacons.

Among the women who ministered were the widows. Paul's instructions to Timothy suggest a category of widows enrolled by the church and supported by the church.

> *Let a widow be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man,*
> *having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work. (1 Tim. 5:9-10)*

The regulations called for women sixty years of age or older

with a record of godly deportment. They no doubt were given opportunities of ministry among the saints such as prayer, teaching younger women, and probably as strength permitted ministry to the sick and suffering. References to their work may be found in writings of the Church Fathers.

H. P. Tiddon, Anglican scholar, suggests that women were admitted to the order of widows on the basis of past active service for Christ. Since advanced age prevented the continuation of that same level of active ministry, the widows gave themselves to devotional ministry rather than the practice of philanthropy.[1]

Sixty does not seem to be an advanced age in modern terms, but considering the shorter life expectancy in the first century, a person reaching sixty years of age was considered very elderly. However, at least one ancient source, the Theodosian Code, sets sixty as the age for deaconesses. The council of Chalcedon set forty as the minimum age of a deaconess.[2]

It cannot be established that the church supported widows from the days of the apostles. They were considered deaconesses, but they did constitute a work force of devoted women essential to the church's total ministry. During the post-Apostolic age the order of widows was gradually absorbed by the order of deaconesses.

Kittle's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* suggests that the instruction given the older women in Titus 2:3-5 may provide some insight into the nature of the ministry carried on by widows.[3]

Paul says to Titus:

> *Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good,*
> *that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,*
> *to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored. (Titus 2:3-5)*

These mature, godly women had a responsibility of pastoral care to the young wives of the congregation. The elders and

deacons of the primitive church recognized the role of women in Christian service and provided legitimate outlets of ministry for them.

Phoebe, of Cenchrea, was a business woman who traveled as far as Rome in the course of her activities. In her home church she served as a deaconess and by her faithful ministry won the commendation of the apostle Paul.

The pastoral epistles provide the divine standard for church order. The Holy Spirit gave Paul for the church a basic principal to be followed in selecting leaders and workers. They were all required to be spiritually minded and above reproach in their walk before men.

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[1] H. P. Liddon, *Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy*. Klock and Klock: Minneapolis, reprint 1978, p. 56.

[2] Ibid., p. 56.

[3] Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. IX, Wm. B. Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, 1978 edition, pp. 456, 457.

8

The Ministry of the Lay-Elders

The lay-elder is a member of the local church leadership team, working in a Spirit-directed community. The eldership is not a show room for individualism but an opportunity to coordinate with the whole body the Spirit-imparted gift or gifts of ministry. Lay-elders have a large and diversified range of work. A number of leaders with differing gifts can be involved.

The lay eldership is the pastor-elder's strongest support. They are his immediate helpers in the pastoral task of caring for the church. While the work of elders touches all the ministries of the church the focus of the eldership is upon the spiritual ministries. Every church should have a job description which details the functions assigned the lay-elders. The pastor's imput in drafting this document is critical, for he is the supervisor of the elders since their activities relates to his work. The lay-elders, more than any other members in the assembly, assist the pastor or pastors.

Most of the functions of the eldership fall within the circle of pastoral care. The pastor must know that the elders are committed and prepared for the kinds of spiritual duties they are expected to carry out. It is for this reason the scriptural qualifications for lay-elders are as high as those of the pastor-elder.

The best overview of pastoral care found in scripture is Paul's address to the Ephesian elders.

> *Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (Acts 20:28)*

The writer to the Hebrews particularizes the pastoral role.

This chapter does not begin to exhaust the possibilities of lay-elder ministry. As churches grow their need for leadership grows. The eldership keeps finding new and creative ways to support leadership of their pastor and to promote the involvement of the laity in the service of Christ.

9

The Ministry of the Deacons

The word *minister* is common to all who serve Christ in His church. It occurs some one hundred times in the New Testament referring both to the service of the clergy and the laity. The apostle Paul spoke of himself as a minister in Colossians 1:23. In Ephesians 4:12 the work of the ministry means the Christian service of every member of the body of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is called a "minister." Against such a broad understanding of ministry it is necessary to place the technical concept of ministry as it relates to deacons and to their female counterparts, the deaconesses.

The same Greek word translated minister is also translated deacon. Deacon is an English transliteration of the Greek word. The deacon is a special kind of minister characterized by compassion and concern for the needs of others. The nature of his office is an index to his work. The first seven deacons were selected at the direction of the apostles to increase the work force of the Jerusalem church. The deacons were to assume leadership in the work for which their gifts fitted them and by so doing would release other brethren whose gifts were prayer and the ministry of the Word.

The modern deacon has just as important a role as did the ancient deacons. With the complexity of society and the sophistication of the church more servants than ever are needed to do the work. Every church needs well-qualified deacons.

The Leadership Role of the Deacon

The office of deacon is a position of leadership. The deacon does not personally perform all the ministries assigned the deacon board. As a leader he recruits and trains helpers so the work force is large enough to carry out its responsibilities. In far too

many churches the deacon does all the work relating to the material aspects of the church. The *diaconate* can enlarge its ministry by involving other lay people in the work. The board of deacons should determine those deacons with the gifts to enlist others and teach them the work. One deacon could be delegated to such a ministry. Other deacons may have gifts of evangelism, or of showing mercy, or of giving. All of these abilities enhance the work of the deacon board.

Each church will want to write its own job description for deacons listing the areas the leadership has agreed should be their function. That guideline should include at least some of the tasks discussed in this chapter. The local church, because of its circumstances, may create other functions for the deacons.

The Distribution of Benevolences

Traditionally, deacons have been assigned to administer the benevolences of the church. Jesus said, "The poor you have always with you." In affluent modern nations there are still the poor. The poor among the saints should be the first concern of the church. The church must think of the poor in the non-Christian community and seek to minister to them. True social concern born of the love of God is the paramount task of the deacon.

Churches located in large metropolitan areas may be surrounded by poverty. The church may be in a changing neighborhood with two or more ethnic communities moving toward control. Because of a poorly conceived deaconship the opportunities to minister in such a community are overlooked. The deacons can build bridges to the community at large. Some congregations have been blessed by establishing "head-start" classes for ethnic children. Family clinics to instruct people in the productive use of their money would be a help. If language is a problem, provide translators and services for people with little or no knowledge of English. Help them find jobs, fill out alien papers and offer classes to teach them English. Practical ministries of this kind in the poor community will open doors for the gospel.

It is not unusual for families within the church to suffer disasters that leave them destitute. The deacons should have at

their disposal money that can be used to relieve the needs of the suffering. Many congregations follow the practice of taking a free-will offering for the deacons' fund at each communion service. Some funds should probably be budgeted for the deacons fund. A loss of job, extended illness, fires, floods, earthquakes and many other conditions come upon both Christian and the non-Christian. The credibility of the church's compassion is established as much by what it does for its own as by what it does for the non-church people.

The Senior Citizen

The twentieth century church has an exciting opportunity of ministry to the elderly. There are more people of retirement age than ever before in our culture. The needs of this group are not always financial. Elderly people need personal attention. Provision should be made for them to participate in group activity. A sizable work force should be assigned to this ministry. Some of the deacons as well as members of the congregation should give this ministry their attention.

Elderly people who are shut-in and unable to attend church should not be left out of the life and activity of the church. Deacons could visit them on a regular basis and teach them the Sunday school lesson. Every church needs a home department for these people in its Sunday school. When the line of communications are kept open these people can make a contribution to the church. Some might be able from their wheel chair or bed to use a telephone. A part of the church's telephone prayer chain could be given them to make contacts when special prayer requests are being circulated. Find something meaningful for them to do. They should be given a church bulletin each week and a set of offering envelopes. In one church pastored by the author two of the biggest contributors to foreign missions were shut-ins past seventy years of age. With a little effort the home department could be ministering to a hundred people. They and their families would know that the church cares.

Ministry to the Sick

The ministry of the deacons to the sick is an ancient tradition.

While the elders are delegated to the ministry of healing, the deacons have the practical care of the sick. How helpful to a family with the mother hospitalized to have the evening meal prepared and brought to the home. What a relief to the husband and father to have a baby sitting service for his pre-school age children while he visits the hospital. What wife would not be comforted by the fact that the deacons cared for the lawn while her husband was hospitalized or perhaps they finished an incompleted paint job. The ministry of compassion to the sick and their families must go beyond a card and some flowers. Changing off nights with a weary spouse at the bedside of a seriously sick husband or wife would help so much to lift their load of care.

Hospitality

The *diaconate* has a ministry of hospitality. The need for entertaining fellow Christians when they traveled was necessary in the ancient church. Public inns and taverns were not available to Christians so the saints opened their homes for this purpose. Modern believers do not have this problem. Motels and hotels are everywhere, with food service and just about any service needed by the traveler. But though the culture has changed, the need for hospitality has not changed. What an exciting ministry a deacon and his family could enjoy by opening their home to overseas missionaries arriving at an airport near their location. Providing overnight lodging, meals, and transportation for the missionary family would be a wonderful expression of the love of Christ in terms of true hospitality.

What about the many new families that visit the church in the course of a month. Each of them could be invited to a home for Sunday dinner. This kind of hospitality would demonstrate the real concern of the church for people and not just statistics.

The deacons might be assigned to oversee the ushers since ushering is a form of hospitality. The initial impression of visitors to the church are often formed by the conduct of the ushers. While the deacons probably cannot assume this task themselves because of their work load, they could be in charge of recruiting, training and overseeing the ushers.

The deacons, deaconesses, and their families are not personally responsible to care for all of the hospitality needs of the church. They should set a good example by their own participation in this ministry, but they must unite all the members in doing the work of entertaining strangers.

The Deacons and the Ordinances

The elders are usually in charge of the spiritual ministries of the church and assist the pastor with the preparation of candidates for baptism and in the distribution of the Lord's Supper. Traditionally the deacons have also related to both of these ordinances. The provision and maintenance of the equipment necessary for baptism is often the work of the deacons. Deaconesses are usually responsible for maintaining and laundering the baptismal robes. The deacons can be enlisted to assist the men at the baptismal service while the deaconesses assist the women. It is helpful to have one of the deacons standing by the baptistry or standing by the pastor in the baptistry to assist him in the event of any difficulty. Good organization and proper planning can make the mechanics of the service something worthy of its high spiritual meaning.

Another humble but beautiful service for deacons and deaconesses is the care of the communion ware. Maintaining a fresh supply of unleavened bread and the grape juice is essential. Washing and storing the communion ware after each service and laundering the linens can be done for the glory of God. A practical system for this responsibility is to assign a deacon and his wife to care for the communion preparation each quarter of the year. One of the deacons should be put in charge of instructing the communion custodians as to their responsibility and the proper procedure. Data should be given them as to the number of portions to prepare. How many reserve portions should there be for unexpected guests or a larger than usual attendance of members. They should also be instructed as to setting the table. The deacon in charge of communion custodians should confer regularly with the pastor as to any necessary change in procedure.

In some churches the elders on a regular basis ask the deacons to assist them in the distribution of the elements at the communion service. It is also helpful for deacons to assist the pastor

and the elders in serving communion to the shut-ins and the sick.

Stewardship

The finances of the local church are a part of the broad concerns of the deacons. The distribution of the benevolences of the church is only the beginning of their concern with finances. The deacon board is the ideal agency of the local church structure to promote stewardship. The average evangelical church fails to train its membership in the Christ-like use of their money. The proper management of money and material resources is a Christian's duty. Stewardship, a necessary discipline for the godly, is a form of service to Christ. Either the believer learns to control his money or his money will control him.

Christians need basic instructions about the stewardship of time, talents, possessions, and money. If every Christian were to obey the Spirit in this regard there would be no financial lack in the ministries of the church. Out of the abundance flows money to finance the overseas outreach and all the supporting institutions at home. The deacons should be knowledgable in what the Bible teaches on this subject, and conducting classes for the membership. They should distribute sound literature on tithing and all forms of giving. A strong *diaconate* might comprise the finance committee for the congregation.

The deacons may discover some of their members are able to give wise counsel regarding the Christian use of money. Families with extremely difficult financial problems could be counseled by understanding members of the deacon board. Such assistance can revolutionize a family. The right use of their money would not only give them the joy of sharing with Christ but it would greatly improve their living conditions.

Ministry to Special Community Needs

The jails, prisons, and other corrective institutions should not be overlooked by the local church in its compassionate outreach to the community. In most communities it is possible for responsible church representatives to minister to the prisons.

Regular services, Bible classes, and literature brings light and blessing within the bleak walls of these institutions. The deacons provide the logical leadership for such a program. Some deacons may have a burden for this work and show evidence that the Holy Spirit has gifted them to reach the hearts of prisoners. From this leadership a team may be selected to cover the penal institutions in the area.

The deacons' ministry goes beyond contact with the prisoners. The families of the prisoners have great needs which are often neglected by both the community and the church. The deacons and the deaconesses will find it most rewarding to minister to prisoners and their families.

The Deacons and Minorities or Ethnics

The influx of new immigrants and refugees plus the black population and aboriginals make the United States and Canada a veritable mosaic of diverse people. The life of the church in today's world is deeply touched by the realities of such pluralism. The rate of neighborhood change is sometimes so rapid as to leave a congregation in ruin and frustration. Some of this could be avoided if the church would keep constant surveilance of its community and react in love to the changes that take place. When new people come into a neighborhood whose language, race, and culture are different from the old residents, some serious effort to build bridges to these new people must come from the church. It should be remembered that the first deacons were appointed in response to tension between two different culture groups, the Hellenistic Jews and the Aramaic-speaking Jews. Modern deacons are called to deal with the same tensions. If the community requires it, some deacons should be assigned to the task of communicating the love of Christ to new neighbors.

In 1970, the Home Missions Board of the Christian Reformed Church called a conference of selected pastors and laymen to discuss the church's mission in today's world. A book containing the papers of that conference was published with the title, *Who in the World?* It speaks in everyday language about the church's ministry to the non-Christian community. It consistently takes the reader back to the New Testament church to

demonstrate the fact that the early church had discovered the forms and methods of effective ministry in the world. The *diaconate* is singled out as an example of a New Testament office that is relevant for now.

> "The *diaconate*, then, is the organizational way of accepting from Jesus His sign of the towel, the symbol of servanthood. But two things have to be remembered here: First, the whole church is a *diaconate*. For practical reasons, some of the servant's task is done by deacons. But Jesus' whole life was spent in service, and this is what He asks of all who follow Him. *Diaconate* spells out the whole character, the full spirit, and the great purpose of the church's mission in the world. The body of Christ is not a loose body of separated functions. The whole body is involved in the service. And the official deacons have the right to tap the talents and resources of every member. For we are all limbs of one body."[1]

Never in the long history of the church has the office of deacon been so necessary. Never has it had such broad opportunities of ministry. The modern deacon is a model of servanthood to the congregation. He is a leader in that he discovers and motivates into action the latent abilities in the congregation. The deacon is the church's best liason to the non-Christian community.

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[1] Clifford Christians, Earl Schipper, Wesley Smeder, *Who in the World?*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1972, p. 134.

10

Spiritual Gifts for Elders and Deacons

The New Testament speaks of leaders that are gifted by the Holy Spirit for ministry. The term gift is used to translate the Greek word *charismata*. *Charismata* is related to the Greek word for grace and speaks of divinely imparted ability to minister. Therefore, this kind of leadership is called *charismatic* leadership in theological treatments of the subject. (This term should not be confused with today's popular use of the term charismatic as it refers to the neo-Pentecostal movement.) Some church renewal writers and some church historians have insisted that the church in its purest days, the days of the apostles, knew only a charismatic leadership. The argument continues that office-bearing positions of leadership became prominent as the charismatic leadership phased out. The difficulty with that position is readily seen upon examining the New Testament record. The office-bearing elders and deacons emerged early in the experience of the church and existed along side the charismatic leadership. In fact, spiritual gifts were necessary to the office-bearing leaders so that no noticeable dichotomy existed between office-bearing leaders and charismatic leaders in the first century church. The leadership of the early church was one as should be the leadership of the modern church. Elders and deacons on occasion exercised the gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11. Elders functioned in pastoral care roles and as teachers. Phillip, one of the deacons of the Jerusalem church, was greatly used of God as an evangelist and a church planter.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not religious playthings but rich provisions of His grace for the purpose of ministry. Ministry is synonymous with service. The only proper use of gifts is to glorify Jesus Christ by serving Him. That explains Peter's reference to the exercise of gifts as stewardship (1 Pet. 4:10). Be-

lievers must some day in the presence of Christ give an account of their use of the gifts imparted by His Spirit.

To possess a gift is to be responsible for the use and the development of that God-given ability for the glory of Christ and the edification of His church. Peter said,

> *As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (1 Pet. 4:10)*

The Stewardship of Gifts

Gifts are designed for ministry. Peter's use of the term *steward* associates the appropriate use of gifts with the role of the servant. Arndt and Gingrich translate the Greek word *kaloi oikonomoi* as

> "good administrators of the varied grace of God."[1]

The steward was a manager or administrator usually of his master's property. As a servant he exercised all the ability he could muster to make his master's investment profitable. The investment of Christ in the believer is the ability to minister for the good of others. To waste that gift is a loss to the believer, to others, and to God.

Gifts and Leadership

The gifts are not only related to ministry in the New Testament scriptures, they are also related to leadership in the church. The leader Christ calls He also equips with gifts appropriate to his responsibility. It is remarkable how many of the gifts are by their very nature intended for leadership. This concept is especially obvious in Eph. 4:11-12:

> *And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.*

In the above passage Paul names five functions of ministry necessary to the church's welfare. He is more concerned with the people who minister than with their particular gifts. The gifted officers enumerated here are a special gift of Christ to His church.

The apostle Paul evidently saw a close relationship between leadership and gifts. Another passage in his epistles relating to this subject is 1 Cor. 12:28-30:

> *And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.*
>
> *All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they?*
>
> *All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?*

In listing the divine appointments for leadership the Apostle mixes the offices with the gifts. He moves from talking about persons, apostles, prophets, and teachers to the abstract term *miracles* as though they were related items in a sequence. He meant by that abstract term those who do miracles. The implication of this sequence is that all who have an office have a gift. It is the responsibility of the assembly to select men to office which possess a gift corresponding to that office. The contemporary church tends to select men to office without regard to their gifts. The inevitable result of such an unscriptural procedure is poor leadership contributing to the progressive decline of the church. Effective ministry must be in the power of the Holy Spirit. The leadership of Christ's church is gifted by the Spirit to assure spiritual ministry to the body.

Necessary Credentials for Leadership

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to equip leaders for their ministry to the church. Enabling for Christian service is divine. Natural talents, attractive personality, wide experience, and a good education may do much to enrich a person's life, but none of these qualities fit a man to serve Christ. The natural man

makes his judgments of character on the outward appearance, but this method will not suffice in the selection of Christian leadership.

The church needs from its leaders sound teaching, wisdom, protection, guidance, direction and good order. The abilities to service these needs come from the Holy Spirit. Pastor-elders, lay-elders, and deacons must have gifts to minister to the body as Christ intends they should. The gifts given to leaders are for the purpose of equipping every believer for service. If gifts are neglected at the leadership level, the possibility of the gifts of all the members coming into use is very unlikely.

Safeguards to the purity and vitality of the church have been built into the divine order of the church administration and ministry. Positions of leadership have their own peculiar kinds of temptation. Pride and the abuse of authority are the most insidious and those which most frequently occur. Honoring the New Testament principle of gifts is one means of overcoming these temptations. Dr. A. B. Simpson grasped this truth in Paul's discussion of the order of gifts.

> "The order of spiritual gifts is very instructive and also humiliating. The first mentioned gifts are those of the apostles, prophets and teachers, the spiritual ministries of the church. Next comes the miraculous gifts of healing subordinate to spiritual ministry—important but not preeminent. Thirdly comes the helps, people that just fit in, and by love, fellowship and prayer and often subordinate service, fill up the innumerable places and become the countless links without which all else would be in vain. After these in a lower order, come the governments, the rulers, the people with authority, wisely placed near the bottom to keep them from falling over with the weight of importance. No one can rule another until he has walked in the ranks and learned to keep his head low."[2]

Though the function of administration is fraught with dangers of spiritual pride, lording it over the flock, and self-aggrandizement it is nevertheless essential to the wellbeing of the church. It is so essential that the Holy Spirit distributes gifts for the purpose of effective administration. Mention is made in

1 Cor. 12:30 of the gift of "governments" or as the newer versions put it "administrations." The Greek word *kubernasis* comes from a verb form meaning "to steer." It is a nautical term and could be translated "shipmaster" or "helmsman." It refers to one who steers a ship. Kittle says of this word,

> "The reference can only be to the specific gifts which qualify a Christian to be a helmsman to his congregation, i.e., a true director of its order and therewith of its life."
>
> ". . . No society can exist without some order and directions. It is the grace of God to give gifts which equip for government."[3]

The principles of management have become an important field of study in modern terms. The size and complexity of business, institutions, and government require very competent and sophisticated administration. The New Testament teaches that the expertise to manage the house of God is on an entirely different basis. Divine management is a charisma given by the Holy Spirit to those called to leadership.

The pastor and the elders are under mandate to give order to the life and activities of the church. God has called the pastor in particular to be a helmsman of the ship of Zion, the church. More than one administrator is needed in a congregation. The pastor should have the ability to oversee the work and to coordinate the efforts of all who display this gift. Lay-elders as well as pastors may have the gift of administration. The church is sailing through troubled waters at this point in history and desperately needs men at the helm that lead with certainty and confidence.

The second gift related to church government is found in Romans 12:8:

> *. . . he who leads with diligence . . .*

The Greek word *proistamenos* literally means to be placed in the front of the line. The King James Version translates it "rule." It is the gift of ruling in the sense of leading the congregation. Kittle finds a deeper meaning in the context of this word.

"In most cases *proistami* seems to have the sense 'to lead,' but context shows in each case that one must take into account sense 'to care for . . .' this is explained by the fact that caring was the obligation of leading members of the infant church. . . ."[4]

The gift of leading is also associated with the pastor. The three principle passages dealing with the pastor-elder all use some form of this verb (1 Thess 5:12; I Tim. 3:5; 5:17) indicating that a pastor must be a good leader. He is the example and the teacher of leadership principles to the laymen. The responsibilities of church leadership are so complex and far reaching that a wise pastor will encourage the gift of leadership among the lay elders. Such gifted lay leaders share with the pastor the responsibility of envisioning the church's work and articulating that vision to the congregation.

The Gift of Prophecy

The pastor's primary function is preaching the Word of God. There are spiritual gifts which relate to this important function. Prophecy is one such gift. Ordinarily prophecy is interpreted to mean foretelling future events. It does have that function at times, but most of the prophecy found in scripture is straightforward preaching which applies revealed truth to the current situation of the people of God. Not all preaching is prophecy but it is one kind of preaching needed in every congregation. A lay-elder may also have the gift of prophecy, with unusual insight into the spiritual needs of the congregation. The pastor should cherish and nurture the gift of prophecy wherever he may find it among the lay-elders.

The apostle Paul in his first letter to Timothy makes an interesting statement regarding the gift of prophecy as it relates to the eldership.

> *Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. (I Tim. 4:14)*

Apparently at Timothy's ordination elders were given the insight by the Holy Spirit to identify Timothy's gift for ministry. Paul advises Timothy to develop that gift by diligent study and faithful service.

Pastoral Care

Since both pastors and lay-elders engage in pastoral care the gift of shepherding will equip them for this ministry. The flock of God not only needs oversight but they also need to be fed and guided and guarded. Pastoral care is an art learned from the Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. He imparts through the Holy Spirit the enabling to care for God's people. Pastoral care implies a direct personal ministry to the people of the congregation. To have the insights, skills and patience to shepherd the great diversity of people which make up any one congregation requires divine assistance. Many churches suffer from the lack of pastoral care. If the pastor must carry this whole load in addition to his other required duties, the individual needs of the fellowship will go unattended. The pastor may multiply his ability to do the work of pastoral care by finding and developing among the elders those with gifts for this work.

The Gifts of Healings

Christ gave to His church the ministry of healing. In Christ's name and by His authority the church is commissioned to heal. The prescribed order of the healing ministry is revealed in the scripture. When Christians are sick they are to call the elders of the church. The elders are instructed by the scriptures to anoint the sick with oil and pray over them in the name of Jesus.

Since the elders have been assigned this ministry it is reasonable to believe that the gifts of healings are most frequently distributed among the elders. The Biblical order for a healing service calls for a plurality of elders to participate in anointing and prayer. When the Biblical order is carried out the integrity of the ministry of healing is maintained. Christ is always projected as the Healer. The elders and the whole church should look to Christ as Head over His church to give the eldership the gifts of healings necessary to meet their congregational needs.

Since the deacons of the church are not engaged in oversight

and pastoral care their gifts coincide with their ministries. The New Testament suggests a number of gifts that should be exercised by the *diaconate*. The deacons of the church need gifts that fit them for ministries of compassion. They serve the practical needs of the family of God and sometimes the non-Christian community. Peter and Paul both speak of the gift of service. Certainly every deacon and deaconess needs the gift of service and they need the strength which God supplies to perform that service (1 Pet. 4:11). The deacon who devotes his time to ministering in a sick room will need the gift of showing mercy. One man of God spent years in a large city hospital shaving patients, trimming their toe nails and finger nails. This unglamorous ministry opened up doors of blessing and gospel outreach that many a pastor would envy. The gift of the Spirit is always exactly what is needed to do the work, but the gift can function only when the believer has consecrated himself to service.

The Gift of Helps

The same Holy Spirit who gifted men in the time of Moses to work in precious metal and other highly skilled crafts necessary in constructing the tabernacle, gifts deacons today to use tools to serve Christ in the caring of the church's physical properties. The hammer and the saw used in the name of Christ is a ministry. The oversight of the buildings to maintain proper repairs and an attractive appearance is also a ministry unto the Lord. The deacons or other lay leaders called by the body and by the Lord to these ministries have every right to believe that the Holy Spirit will gift them for their labors.

The Gift of Giving

The very nature of the deacon's work would give him a concern for Christian stewardship. The deacon seeks to use the church's resources to help those in need. What better gift might a deacon possess than that of giving. Paul explains the gift of giving should be exercised with liberality (Rom. 12:8). The generosity of the deacons should provide an example for the whole congregation. The consistent giving of leadership encourages every member to honor the Lord by their own faithfulness in giving.

The Gift of Faith

Some gifts are distributed to all the leaders of the church and among these is the gift of faith. It must be understood that faith in this context does not refer to saving faith but rather a working faith. It is the faith to believe that God will work out His plan and provide abundantly for it. Leadership may dream dreams and have visions of outreach and enlargement, but they will never be launched without faith. Most of God's work must be undertaken with inadequate resources and in the face of seemingly unsurmountable obstacles. The success of the project can only be attributed to the fact that God is pleased with the faith of His people. Faith unlocks for the church the invisible supply of resources in the heavenly places. The present affluence of churches in the western world has not removed the need to trust God for His work. The church on the move is the church whose pastor, elders, and deacons seek God's will for the church's ministry and in simple faith believe Him for the resources to accomplish that ministry.

The gifts of the Spirit speak of the continued need of the supernatural in the life of the church. While churches own properties, handle large sums of money, recruit and train people, the church is not just another organization or a business or a corporation. The success of the work of Christ's church has a divine origin. Whatever helpful ideas may be drawn from modern management concepts and other disciplines of learning, they cannot replace the need for the gifts of the Spirit.

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[1] W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, University of Chicago, Chicago, 1974 edition, p. 562.

[2] A. B. Simpson, *Christ in the Bible Series: I Corinthians*, Christian Publications, Inc., Harrisburg, Pa., p. 102.

UFMCC Clergy Credentials & Concerns Committee
Risk Management Background Check

Date of Request: _____

Name of Clergyperson: _____

Church/Agency making request: _____

Address of Church/Agency: _____

City _____ State/Prov_____ Zip/Code _____

Name/title of person making request _____

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Sexual Misconduct Background Check

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Signature/title Date

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10. Inappropriate violation of confidentiality
11. Sexual harassment, i.e., any sexually related behavior that is unwelcome, offensive, and which fails to respect the rights of others.

Disloyalty

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Dereliction of Duty

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Name of Clergyperson: _____

Church/Agency making request: _____

Address of Church/Agency: _____

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4

Vestments

Vestments are the distinctive garments worn by worship leaders when performing liturgical functions. In various forms vestments have been used since Old Testament times, although Christian vestments are derived largely from garments of the late Roman Empire. Vestments have both utilitarian and symbolic value.

There are several basic purposes for vestments. First, they designate particular liturgical functions. It has been almost universal in human history that people have worn particular clothes for particular functions and particular occasions. For worship leaders, the vestments place less visual emphasis on the person and greater emphasis on the liturgical role being performed, in order that attention and glory may be given to God rather than to the worship leader. Second, in their beauty, vestments reflect and witness to the beauty of God. The beauty of vestments is primarily in their texture, form, and color, rather than in any symbols sewn on them. Third, vestments reflect the continuity of Christian worship through history. Worship leaders today wear essentially the same types of vestments that have been worn since earlier centuries of the Christian church. Thus, vestments provide a visual continuity with our ancestors in the faith.

Clergy Vestments

Alb

The alb is a white ankle-length garment with close-fitting sleeves. It is the church's oldest vestment. The name comes from the Latin word *albus*, which means white, and the whiteness symbolizes the purity and light of Christ. As a vestment, the alb derives from the white tunic worn by professional persons in the ancient Roman Empire. Albs were worn by clergy for all services until the eleventh century, when the surplice (see below) began to be used for noneucharistic worship. Today the alb is usually worn for all services except Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Prayer at the Close of the Day (Compline). When the Holy Communion is celebrated, the presiding minister usually wears a chasuble over his or her alb.

The alb is gathered at the waist by a cincture, a white rope or heavy white cord tied at the side. For clergy, the stole is placed through or tucked under the cincture. An amice, a rectangular neckcloth, has long been worn as a sort of collar with the alb. The amice originated as a means to protect the alb and other vestments from perspiration. Some new albs have collars resembling amices.

Stole

Ordained clergy wear stoles over the alb or surplice as a sign of their work and their ordination. The stole is a symbol of the yoke of obedience to Christ (see Matt. 11:28–30). The stole, being the sign of ordination, is never worn by a lay person.

The stole is a long, narrow band of heavy fabric worn around the neck. When worn with the alb for Holy Communion, the stole is crossed over the breast and tucked under or through the cincture. When worn over the surplice for other services, the stole hangs straight in front.

Stoles are worn in the appointed color for the day, and in

fabric and color they usually match the chasuble and paraments.

Chasuble

The chasuble is the principal vestment for the presiding minister during the celebration of the Holy Communion. It is a very full vestment worn like a poncho over the alb and stole. The fullness of the chasuble symbolizes the fact that the eucharistic meal is intended to embrace all baptized people; thus, the chasuble is a sign that the abundance of God's grace and the abundance of the eucharistic feast are intended for all God's family.

Chasubles are made of a wide variety of rich fabrics. Their primary symbolism is in their fullness and color, rather than in any symbols attached to them. It is not necessary to put symbols on symbols! The chasuble is often decorated with an orphrey, a strip of contrasting fabric in front and back—either a straight vertical pillar or the shape of a Y.

It is ideal for the chasuble to match the stole, as well as the paraments, burse, and chalice veil. The color is that appointed for the day.

Cassock

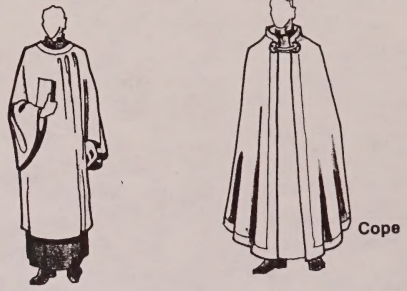
The cassock is not actually a vestment, but rather is a basic garment over which vestments are worn. Cassocks are black ankle-length garments, which are fitted from the waist up and have narrow sleeves. Cassocks usually button or snap all the way down the front.

For noneucharistic services (especially Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Compline), it is customary for worship leaders to wear cassock and surplice. At eucharistic services the cassock may be worn under the alb.

Surplice

The full-sleeved white vestment worn over the cassock is the surplice. Surplices are at least knee-length, and they derive from the longer and more tailored alb. The whiteness of the surplice symbolizes the purity of Christ.

The surplice is customarily worn over the cassock for Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Prayer at the Close of the Day (Compline).



Cope

The cope is essentially an ornate procession cloak or cape adapted for liturgical use. It is open in the front, fastened near the neck with a clasp known as a morse.

Copes may be worn for festive services of Morning and Evening Prayer, and for ceremonial occasions such as the procession in a wedding, funeral, ordination, installation, or confirmation.

Pectoral Cross

A pectoral cross (from the Latin word *pectus*, which means breast) is a cross on a chain worn by a bishop. It is presented during the bishop's installation as an emblem of the office.

Other Vestments

Lay assisting ministers and acolytes are also appropriately vested for their responsibility in worship leadership. Their vest-

ments are determined by those worn by the presiding minister. That is, if the presiding minister wears an alb, the assisting ministers and acolytes also wear albs. If the presiding minister wears a cassock and surplice, other participating clergy wear cassock and surplice, and lay assisting ministers and acolytes are vested in cassocks and cottas. The cotta is a waist-length version of the surplice. Crucifers usually wear albs.

Choirs, organists, and other musicians usually wear white albs or black cassocks and white cottas; robes resembling academic gowns are to be avoided because of their connotations, and persons who are not ordained do not wear stoles.

Confirmands sometimes wear white capes, which are a reminder of the white baptismal garment. Robes that are academic in style should be avoided, because they give an incorrect and inappropriate connotation to the confirmation rite—it is *not* a graduation, which is what academic garments suggest.

Caring for Vestments

The cleaning, storage, and preparation of vestments are usually the responsibility of the altar guild. Vestments should be kept clean, fresh, and ready to wear at any time, like any other good clothes for special occasions.

Most albs, surplices, and cottas are now made of washable fabrics, and may simply be laundered and pressed. Nonwashable fabrics and all other vestments require dry cleaning by professionals. Most vestments are stored on hangers, but chasubles may be laid flat in large drawers in the sacristy; it is helpful to pad the folds with tissue to avoid creases and possible damage to the fabric.

5

Basic Responsibilities

The altar guild is entrusted with the privilege of preparing the worship space for that gathering of God's family known as corporate worship. This ministry of preparation is as important to the worship life of the church as the pastor's preparation time or the choir's rehearsal. Meaningful worship does not simply happen! It requires reverent and thorough preparation by all who are involved in it. The altar guild is concerned with the things of worship—the care of the worship space, and the care and placement of the furnishings, appointments, and ornaments used in worship. The overall goal of the altar guild is to see that the worship space is kept beautiful and in good order, both to glorify God and to provide a setting that helps enable the congregation to worship in a meaningful way. It is also the responsibility of the altar guild to keep the worship space ready for persons' individual use for prayer between services.

Members of the altar guild are servants of the liturgy, and they have several basic responsibilities. Housekeeping is one of the basic tasks, and it is best carried out with the attitude that it is a high privilege to care for the things that symbolize God's love and presence. The altar guild, along with the sexton, is responsible for keeping the chancel, altar, font, and pulpit clean and free of clutter. Linens, paraments, and vestments are cleaned regularly and kept pressed in readiness for use in wor-

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Holy Communion: Place and Preparation

The Holy Communion is the chief service of the church. It is known by many names, including the Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Altar, and the Lord's Supper. By whatever name, this sacrament is the feast of the baptized family of God, gathered around the table of the Lord. In Holy Baptism we are initiated into God's family; in Holy Communion we are sustained in that family. In Holy Baptism we are made part of the priesthood of all believers; in Holy Communion we are nourished and strengthened to carry out our priesthood of witness and service in the world. In Holy Baptism we are joined to our Lord's death and resurrection; in Holy Communion we both proclaim his death and celebrate the feast of his victory.

The altar guild has a special and privileged responsibility to prepare for this celebration which is so central to Christian worship. It is important for guild members to grow continually in the meaning of the Eucharist, as well to be thoroughly familiar with the names and use of eucharistic vessels and linens.

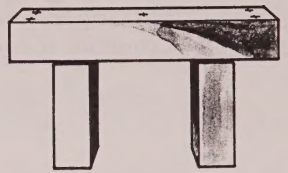
The Altar

The focal point of the worship space is the altar, the table of the Lord. More than any other furnishing, the altar symbolizes God's constant presence in his church. The altar is therefore the center of the church's life, both architecturally and liturgically.

The term altar is derived from the Latin word *alta,* which means high. The altar is usually on a raised platform known as a predella. Its height both enhances the dignity and the significance of the altar, and enables the assembled congregation to see the actions at the altar.

The altar is the table for the Holy Communion meal—the place where the eucharistic feast is celebrated and around which God's baptized family gathers to share this feast. In the early church the altar was free-standing, and the presiding minister faced the people for the eucharistic celebration. During later centuries when theology began to deteriorate, people were often considered unworthy to commune. The altar was moved against the east wall of the church, often far away from the congregation. The priest celebrated the Eucharist with his back to the people.

Luther and the Reformation helped restore the Holy Communion to the people, and finally we are again seeing altars placed in a free-standing position as tables. In this position, the ministers stand behind the altar for the Great Thanksgiving in the Holy Communion liturgy, facing the people in a more courteous, hospitable, and intimate relationship. The free-standing altar witnesses to the meal character and fellowship of the Eucharist.



The top of the altar is known as the mensa, which means table. The height of the mensa is thirty-nine inches, and it is usually rectangular or square. Five Greek crosses are inscribed into the top of the mensa, one at each corner and one in the center. The crosses represent the five wounds of our crucified Lord.

The mensa is used only as the table for the eucharistic feast.

Nothing is placed on it except altar linens, the missal stand, eucharistic vessels, and sometimes candles.

Altars which are not free-standing often have a retable, which is a small shelf above the back of the mensa. On the retable (which is sometimes also called a gradine) may be placed the altar cross, flower vases, and candles. Flower vases are not placed on the mensa itself.

Older churches often have a reredos, which is a high extension of the retable, made of carved wood or stone. When there is no reredos, an ornamental cloth known as a dossal is sometimes used as background for an altar which is not free-standing.

Altar Linens

Three linens are traditionally used to vest the altar, marking it as the table of the Lord. They are on the altar at all times, except that they are removed at the conclusion of the Maundy Thursday liturgy, and the altar remains bare on Good Friday.

Cerecloth

The first linen placed on the mensa (the top of the altar) is the cerecloth. When the altar is stone, the cerecloth is waxed or otherwise waterproofed to prevent dampness from staining the other linens and from damaging the various vessels. Otherwise it is simply a heavy linen and helps protect the mensa. The cerecloth measures the exact dimensions of the top of the mensa.

When the cerecloth is removed from the altar, it is rolled carefully in order to prevent wrinkles, which in a waxed fabric may be impossible to remove.

Protector Linen

Over the cerecloth is often placed a second linen, to which the altar parament(s) may be sewn. This protector linen is the same depth as the mensa and the same width as the parament.

Fair Linen

The fair linen is the most important of the altar linens, because it represents the burial linen or shroud in which our

Lord's body was wrapped after his crucifixion. The word *fair* refers to the fine quality and cleanliness of this linen. Thus, because of its symbolism and because it is very visible to the worshiping assembly, the fair linen should always be spotless and fresh. Each church will find it necessary to own at least two fair linens, so that one is always clean and ready to use. When laundered, the fair linen is never folded.

The fair linen is the same depth as the top of the mensa, but its length may vary, depending on the altar and its paraments. Often the fair linen extends over the ends of the mensa one-third or two-thirds the height of the altar, or it may be the same length as the mensa. Generous hems (as much as two inches) help the fair linen hang straight and lie flat.

Traditionally, five Greek crosses are embroidered in white on the fair linen—one in the center, and one near each corner of the mensa. The five crosses symbolize the five wounds of Christ.

It is not appropriate to place lace edges on the fair linen.

Sacramental Linens

Four additional linens are used for the celebration of the Holy Communion: the corporal, the pall, purificators, and the veil. These linens are carried in a burse.

Corporal

The corporal is a square of fine linen which is laid by an assisting minister on the center of the altar over the fair linen during the offertory. The eucharistic vessels are then set on the corporal. This linen is sometimes interpreted to symbolize the linen placed over the face of Christ for his burial. The corporal is one of the most ancient altar linens used for Christian worship.

Depending on the depth of the altar, the corporal is usually about twenty inches square. A small Greek cross is usually embroidered in white near the center front edge.

The corporal is folded and ironed inside out in thirds each way (forming nine squares), so that it can be unfolded on the

altar with the right side up. Thus, when it is refolded as the altar is cleared, crumbs of bread are folded into it and not dropped onto the mensa or the floor. It is carried to and from the altar in the burse. A fresh corporal is used for each celebration of the Eucharist, and each congregation needs several corporals.

Pall

Used to cover the chalice before and after Communion, the pall is a linen-covered square of stiff cardboard, aluminum, or plastic. The size of the pall is determined by the diameter of the chalice, but it is usually six to nine inches square. The top of the pall is often embroidered in white with a cross or a symbol relating to the church year.

The linen covering the pall is usually sewn as a pocket, so that the stiff lining may be removed for laundering the linen. A clean pall should always be used.

Purificators

Purificators are square linen napkins used to wipe the rim of the chalice during the distribution. The size depends on the size of the chalice, since the purificator is draped over the chalice before and after the celebration, but the size is often twelve to fifteen inches square. It is folded like the corporal, except right side out.

Several purificators are needed for each chalice for each eucharistic service. When not in use, they are kept in the burse.

Veil

Several kinds of veils may be used. The chalice veil matches the paraments and vestments in the color for the day; when this veil is used, the burse matches the veil in color and fabric.

When a whole loaf of bread is used for the Eucharist, a white linen veil—perhaps a second corporal or a large purificator—is sometimes used to cover it prior to the offertory.

Some congregations use a large white linen veil as a post-Communion cover for the vessels and elements.

Burse

Sacramental linens are carried to and from the altar in the burse, which is an envelopelike case. The burse matches the chalice veil, paraments, stole, and chasuble in the liturgical color for the day. It is constructed with two squares of cardboard, about nine inches square, each covered with linen and bound together on one side. This is covered with another piece of fabric, matching the paraments, so that the sides are pleated like bellows.

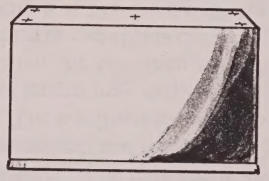
Congregations using chalice veils and burses will need a set in each liturgical color.

Paraments

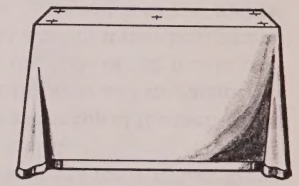
Paraments adorn the altar in the appointed colors of the liturgical day or season, helping to make the altar the visual focus of the worship space. In pointing to the day or season through colors and symbols, paraments serve also devotional and educational functions. Paraments have been used since at least the fifth century A.D.

There are five types of altar paraments in use: the frontal, the Laudean frontal, the superfrontal, the antependium, and the frontlet. The type selected for a specific altar is influenced by the style of the altar, and may also vary according to the time of the church year.

A frontal covers the entire front of the altar, from the front top edge of the mensa down to the predella. This type of frontal



Frontal



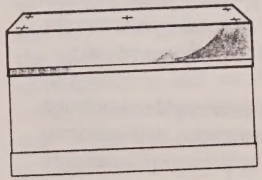
Laudean Frontal

may be attached to the protector linen, which is covered with the fair linen.

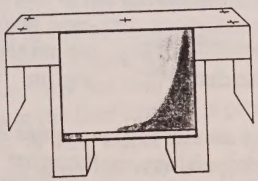
A Laudean frontal (sometimes known as a Jacobean frontal)

covers the entire altar, hanging to the predella on all four sides of a freestanding altar or the sides and front of an east-wall altar.

A superfrontal may be used alone or as a part of the frontal. It covers the length of the altar, but hangs down only ten to twelve inches from the top of the mensa.

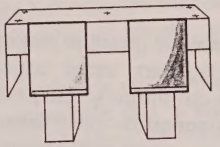


Superfrontal



Antependium

An antependium, much narrower than a frontal, covers one-third to one-half the front of the altar. It may hang all the way to the floor, but usually is made to extend over the front of the altar about three-fourths the height of the altar. It is hung in the center of the altar.



Frontlets

Frontlets are hung down the front of the altar in pairs. They are usually two to three feet wide and extend about two-thirds of the distance to the predella.

Colors

Congregations will find it useful to provide at least eight sets of paraments and vestments to accommodate the colors of the church year.

White is the color of light, gladness, purity, and joy in Christ. White is thus the liturgical color appointed for festivals of

Christ—the Annunciation, the Visitation, Christmas and its season, the Name of Jesus, the Epiphany, the Baptism of Our Lord, the Presentation, the Transfiguration, the Sundays of Easter (although gold is an alternate color for Easter Day itself), and Christ the King. White is also used for certain other festivals (such as the Holy Trinity) and commemorations, and it is the alternate color for Maundy Thursday. If seasonal symbols appear on paraments, it may be wise to have more than one white set, in order to relate each more closely to the varying times of the church year.

Bright red is the color of fire—the fire of the Holy Spirit. Red is used for the Day of Pentecost, for martyrs' days, and for certain other days celebrating events in the church, such as Reformation, ordination, and church dedications and anniversaries.

Scarlet is a hue deeper than red; scarlet is the color of blood. It is used during Holy Week—from the Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday) through Maundy Thursday. The color should be selected carefully so it is not confused with the bright red used for festivals.

Purple is the penitential color of Lent. It is also the alternate color for Advent, when it is interpreted as the royal color of the coming King. In congregations where purple is used for both Lent and Advent, it will be helpful to have two different sets, with appropriate and distinctive symbols on each.

Blue is the preferred color for Advent, because it is the color of hope, a central theme of Advent. Pale and navy blues should be avoided, in favor of royal blue.

Green is the color of growth, and it is used during the seasons after Epiphany and Pentecost.

Gold is the appropriate alternate color for Easter Day, since that day is the "queen of feasts," the most important day in the church year. The use of gold paraments on that one day helps to distinguish it in a special visual way from the remainder of the year.

Black, the color of ashes and humiliation and mourning, is appointed for Ash Wednesday.

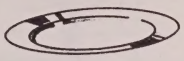
Missal Stand and Altar Book

The missal stand holds the large service book (*Lutheran Book of Worship Ministers Edition*). It may be a wood or metal bookstand, or simply be a cushion on which the service book rests for the celebration of the Eucharist. The missal stand and altar book should be removed when not in use.

Eucharistic Vessels

Vessels used for the celebration of the Holy Communion usually constitute a matched set of fine metal such as silver or gold. Pewter or earthenware vessels may also be used. The appearance and material of the vessels should be worthy of the precious elements they hold—containers appropriate for the body and blood of our Lord. A minimum set of eucharistic vessels includes a chalice, paten, and flagon or cruet. If hosts (rather than a whole loaf of bread) are used, a ciborium or host box is also needed.

The chalice is the large cup used for the consecration and distribution of the sacramental wine. The cup portion of the chalice is attached to the base (or foot) by the stem. If the distribution is not by common cup, the chalice needs a pouring lip. In this situation, the wine is poured from the chalice into a small glass held by the communicant. Prefilled individual glasses should *never* be used. Increasingly, congregations are returning to the traditional common cup, because it is a fuller symbol of the unity we share in Christ.

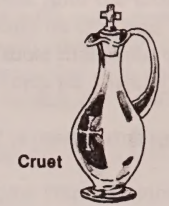


The paten is the plate used for the sacramental bread. Its size depends on the type of bread used. It is traditional practice for the paten to be set on the rim of the chalice for vesting in veil and burse. When a whole loaf of bread is used, however, another larger paten or basket is usually also needed.

A flagon or cruet is usually used to hold the wine before it is poured into the chalice. The flagon is a tall covered pitcher,

usually made of fine metal. The cruet is a glass vessel with a stopper, often topped with a cross.

Flagon



Cruet

When hosts (wafers) rather than a loaf of bread are used, they are kept in a ciborium or host box. A ciborium is similar to a chalice, but has a fitted lid. A host box (also known as a pyx) is a short round container with a lid.

Ciborium

Host Box

In some congregations the presiding minister ritually cleanses his or her hands prior to the Great Thanksgiving. For this, a small dish known as a lavabo bowl is used. The water is poured over the hands from a cruet, and the hands are dried with a lavabo towel. This is a small linen towel, usually twelve by eighteen inches. It is folded lengthwise, right side out, in thirds, so that it will hang evenly over the arm of the assisting minister or acolyte.

A spoon is sometimes useful for removing foreign particles from the wine in a chalice. The bowl of a spoon made for this purpose is perforated.

The Elements

At the Last Supper, our Lord took bread and wine, gave thanks to God, and declared that they were his body and blood! He shared the bread and wine with his disciples, and told them to "Do this for the remembrance" of him. After his crucifixion and resurrection, he revealed himself to two of his disciples on the Emmaus road in the breaking of bread. Christ's followers of all times have had an insatiable appetite for this bread and wine, because they know that in them the Lord himself is present. When the prayer and actions of the Upper Room are repeated by the presiding minister, we share the very life of the crucified and risen Christ. The Lord is truly present "in, with, and under" the bread and the wine in the Holy Communion.

Bread signifies several things biblically and in our own time. The ancient Israelites believed that bread came from the hands of God—and indeed, in the Eucharist, it does. Bread also carries the image of death and resurrection: the wheat seed is buried in the earth, where it comes to life and sprouts; and then the grain is crushed to be harvested so that flour can be made and bread can rise. Bread also, of course, satisfies basic human hunger.

The early Christian church always used ordinary bread for Holy Communion, a practice that is still preferred. A whole loaf of bread has advantages over individual wafers, because the one loaf is a powerful symbol of our unity in Christ: "When we break the bread, is it not a means of sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, many as we are, are one body; for it is one loaf of which we all partake" (1 Cor. 10:16–17, NEB). The breaking and sharing of the bread is a symbol also of our Lord's crucifixion, a witness to his own body being broken on the tree of the cross.

Carefully made homemade wheat bread is particularly good for the Eucharist, for its visual reminder that God takes common earthly elements and human labor and uses them for his extraordinary purposes. Bread that crumbles easily should be avoided. When a whole loaf of bread is used, provision should be made for cleaning the chancel after the service. Several sacramental bread recipes are provided later in this chapter.

Wine is used for the Holy Communion because that is what Christ used in the Upper Room and directed us to use when we celebrate his holy meal. In addition, wine is used because of its unique meaning. While Psalm 104 speaks of bread for strength, it speaks of wine for gladdening our hearts. Bread was a staple in ancient Jewish meals, but wine was used only for festive occasions. The purpose of wine was not to quench thirst, but to give joy and life. Thus, wine is not only the blood of Christ by its institution by him; it is also a sign of the festive and joyful nature of the eucharistic meal. Grape juice, which is artificial wine, is not appropriate for this sacramental feast.

The wine may be homemade, purchased commercially, or purchased from an ecclesiastical supplier. A fine dinner wine should be used, avoiding sweet port. Only wine made from grapes should be used. The wine may be white or red. Red, however, is more difficult to remove from linens.

The Credence and Offertory Table

The credence is a small shelf or table near the altar on which the eucharistic vessels and missal stand are kept prior to the offering. Many churches have two credences—one for the sacramental vessels and one for the offering plates and alms basins.

The offertory table is a small table near the rear of the nave where the bread and wine are placed until they are carried forward, along with the money offering, during the offertory.

Both the credence and offertory tables are covered with white linen cloths.

Setting the Table of the Lord

Preparation of the altar for the eucharistic feast should be done well ahead of the celebration. The first tasks are to be certain that the chancel and its furnishings are clean, that unnecessary items are removed, that the correct paraments are in

place, that all linens are freshly laundered and ironed, that all of the sacramental vessels are clean and polished, and that sufficient quantities of bread and wine are ready.

Most important in all of the preparatory work is that it be done with the reverence and good order that befit Christ's presence. Awareness of Christ's presence in the sacrament will ensure that the work is done with genuine joy and gratitude for God's grace. To prepare the Lord's table is an immense privilege!

There are various acceptable ways of arranging the vessels for the Eucharist. The method used in a given parish will be determined by the available chancel furnishings and vessels, by the pastor's preferences, and by a sense of good liturgical order.

In determining parish customs, the altar guild and the pastor must first ascertain the resources of the church. Is the credence to be used? Is the altar free-standing? Are burse and veil to be used? Is the paten a proper size to fit into the rim of the chalice? Is there an offertory procession? Is the pastor right- or left-handed? Are there assisting ministers? Answers to questions such as these will help in selecting a method for preparing the table of the Lord.

The chalice is often vested in the traditional manner. It is done in several steps:

1. A purificator folded in thirds lengthwise is placed over the mouth of the empty chalice, so that the right and left sides hang evenly over the edges of the chalice.
2. The paten is placed on top of the purificator. (If hosts rather than whole loaf are to be used, a large host may be placed on the paten.)
3. The paten is covered with the pall.

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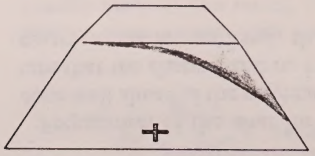

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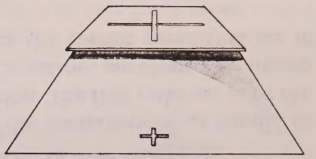

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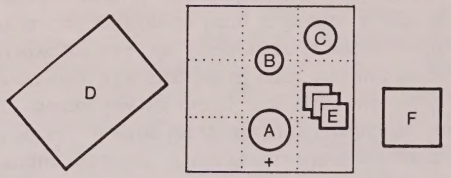
4. The chalice veil in the proper color of the day is placed over the pall and arranged so that a trapezoid is seen when viewed from the front.
5. The corporal and additional purificators are placed in the burse, which matches the veil. The burse is laid on top of the vested chalice.

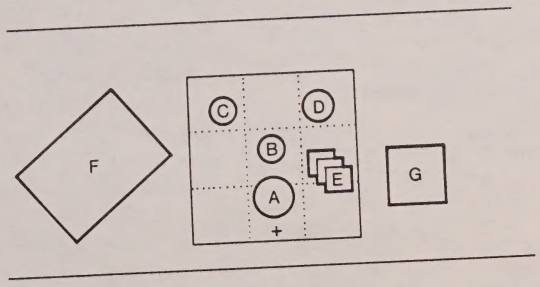
It is preferable for the vested chalice (as well as flagon and other vessels) to be kept on a credence until the offering, at which time an assisting minister carries it to the altar and sets the table. However, if there is no credence, the vested chalice may be set on the altar prior to the service.

During the offering, the corporal is placed on the altar, and the vessels are set on the corporal. The following arrangement is appropriate when a whole loaf of bread is used:



A-Paten
B-Chalice
C-Flagon or Cruet
D-Missal Stand
E-Purificators
F-Burse

If hosts are used, the following arrangement may be employed:



A-Paten
B-Chalice
C-Ciborium or Host Box
D-Flagon or Cruet
E-Purificators
F-Missal Stand
G-Burse

When additional chalices are needed for the service, they are brought to the altar and filled just before the distribution; only one chalice is on the altar for the Great Thanksgiving.

Other Preparations

Depending on local practices, the altar guild may have additional responsibilities in preparing for the Holy Communion.

In some congregations, Communion registration cards are placed in pew racks in order that a record can be kept of communicants. It is also important to be sure that sharpened pencils are in place.

In congregations where the common cup is not used, it is necessary for trays of individual glasses to be set out for distribution as communicants approach the altar. These glasses should never be prefilled, because that practice weakens the symbolism of our oneness in Christ and suggests an overly individualistic understanding of the sacrament.

When the elements are to be carried to the sick and homebound following the congregational service (using the rite of Distribution of Communion to Those in Special Circumstances, *Occasional Services*, pp. 76–81), adequate bread and wine must be provided prior to the service. In addition, the vessels for carrying the elements and the purificators need to be prepared.

Following the Service

After the liturgy is concluded, all of the eucharistic vessels and linens are removed from the chancel and taken to the sacristy for cleaning. Unused hosts are stored in a cool and dry place for future use, keeping separate those which have been consecrated. The remains of a loaf of bread should be eaten by the ministers, and shared with others if a large amount remains. Wine remaining in the chalice may be consumed by the ministers or poured into a piscina (a special drain going directly into the ground) or onto the ground.

Vessels are washed in hot soapy water and dried with soft cloths. Once cleaned, they should be handled with soft, dry gloves or cloths in order to prevent marking them. If polishing is needed, see the instructions in chapter 5 or as provided by the manufacturer.

All sacramental linens should be laundered and ironed after each use. Instructions for cleaning and stain removal are provided in chapter 5.

Eucharistic Bread Recipes

Pita

Pita is a flat, round, hollow bread (sometimes referred to as "pocket bread") which is eaten extensively in biblical lands. It is good for sacramental use because of its size, shape, and ease in handling. The following recipe is from Israel, courtesy of Avraham Har.

1. Dissolve 2 packages of yeast in 1 cup of lukewarm water.
2. Add 1 teaspoon of salt and 2½ cups of white flour to the water, and stir.
3. Knead lightly, and let the dough rise in a warm place for approximately 1 hour.
4. Knead the dough again.

5. Divide the dough into 8 equal parts. Form each part into a ball, and place on floured waxed paper.
6. Let the balls rise again for about 30 minutes.
7. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 15 minutes.
8. Roll each ball on floured paper into a circle about 4 inches in diameter.
9. Flour 2 cookie sheets. Arrange 4 balls on each sheet.
10. Place the cookie sheets in the middle of the oven, and bake for about 3 minutes. The bread will look puffed in the middle, and the outside will be off-white with brown spots.

After cooling, the pita bread should be wrapped tightly to prevent drying. It may be stored in a refrigerator for several days. For longer storage, wrap well and freeze.

Flat Whole Wheat Bread

This recipe makes 4 flat 10-inch loaves, each of which will serve about 200 communicants. It is provided by Pat Frost, of St. Paul Lutheran Church, New City, New York.

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Mix well together the following ingredients:
   - 6½ cups whole wheat flour
   - ¼ cup olive oil
   - 2 tablespoons honey
   - 1 teaspoon salt
   - 2½ cups warm milk
   - 2 eggs
3. Divide the dough into 4 sections. Knead each section on a floured breadboard, and roll out each to make a 10-inch circle.
4. Slightly oil cookie sheets with a paper towel. On cookie sheet, carefully score each loaf vertically and horizontally, with spaces about 5/8 inch wide; do not score through to bottom.
5. Bake for 20 minutes.
6. Put on racks to cool.

These loaves may be frozen for storage. The recipe may be halved.

White Communion Bread

The following is adapted from a Coventry Cathedral recipe. It makes 4 to 6 loaves.

- 1 package active dry yeast
- ½ cup warm water (110–15 degrees Fahrenheit)
- 1¾ cups lukewarm milk (scalded then cooled)
- 7–7½ cups flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 tablespoons shortening

In bowl, dissolve yeast in water. Sift flour. Add milk, sugar, salt, shortening, and half of flour to yeast and water mixture. Beat until smooth. With hand, mix in enough remaining flour until dough cleans the bowl. Turn onto lightly floured board. Cover; let rest 10–15 minutes. Knead 10 minutes until smooth. Place in greased bowl; bring greased side up. Cover with cloth. Let rise in warm place (85 degrees Fahrenheit) until double, about 1 or 2 hours.

Punch down, and turn out on floured board. Divide dough into 4 to 6 loaves (2½ ounces each). Cover, and let rest for 10 minutes. Roll out each loaf with a rolling pin into a 4-inch round. Mark with a deep cross. Arrange on a flat cookie sheet. Let rise in warm place for 40–50 minutes.

Heat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. Bake 15 minutes or until golden brown. Cool slowly away from direct drafts.

ing the eucharistic elements by dipping the bread or host into the wine.

Laudian Frontal A type of frontal which entirely covers all sides of a free-standing altar.

Lavabo Bowl used for cleansing the presiding minister's hands in the Holy Communion or after the imposition of ashes.

Lectern Reading stand in the chancel from which the Scripture lessons are read.

Lectionary The appointed system of Scripture lessons for the days of the church year. Also refers to the book that contains these readings.

Lector The assisting minister who reads the Scripture lessons.

Lent From the Anglo-Saxon for "spring"; the penitential forty-day season (excluding Sundays) before Easter, beginning with Ash Wednesday. Symbolic of Christ's forty days in the wilderness. Lent is traditionally the season when candidates prepare for Holy Baptism, which is celebrated at the Easter Vigil. The color is purple.

Lenten Veil Cloth used to cover crosses, pictures, and other objects during Lent.

Linens Refers to three groups of white linen cloths: altar linens (cerecloth, protector linen, and fair linen), Communion linens (corporal, pall, purificators, and veil), and other linens (credence linen, offertory table linen, lavabo towel, and baptismal towel).

Liturgy From the Greek for "the people's work"; the prescribed worship service of the church.

Lucernarium From the Latin for "light"; the service of light at the beginning of Evening Prayer.

Matins From the Latin for "morning"; morning service of Scripture reading and prayer; also known as Morning Prayer.

Maundy Thursday From the Latin for "commandment"; the Thursday in Holy Week which commemorates the institution of the Holy Communion. The color is scarlet or white.

Mensa From the Latin for "table"; the top of the altar.

Missal Altar service book.

Missal Stand Stand or cushion on the altar on which the altar service book is placed during the Holy Communion liturgy.

Morning Prayer Morning service of Scripture reading and prayer; also known as Matins.

Morse The clasp used to fasten a cope.

Narthex Entrance hall of a church building which leads to the nave.

Nave From the Latin for "ship"; the section of the church building between the narthex and the chancel, where the congregation gathers for worship.

New Fire The fire kindled on Easter Eve, used to light the paschal candle for the Easter Vigil. Symbolic of Christ's resurrected presence.

Occasional Service Liturgical rite used from time to time, including rites for confirmation, burial, marriage, healing, ordination, dedication of a church building, installation of a pastor, etc.

Offertory Table A small table near the rear of the nave which holds the bread and wine prior to the offertory.

Ordinary Those parts of the liturgy which do not change from week to week.

Orphrey Ornamental band on a chasuble or parament.

Pall Linen-covered square placed over rim of the chalice. (See also funeral pall.)

Palm Sunday See Sunday of the Passion.

Paraments Cloth hangings of various liturgical colors used to adorn the altar, pulpit, and lectern.

Paschal Candle Large white candle carried in procession during the Easter Vigil, and placed near the altar and lighted during the Easter season, symbolizing Christ's resurrected presence. At other times of the year, it is placed near the font and lighted for Holy Baptism, and placed at the head of the coffin for the burial liturgy.

Paten Plate used to hold bread during the Holy Communion liturgy.

Pectoral Cross A cross on a chain, worn around the neck by a bishop.

Pentecost From the Greek for "fiftieth day"; principal festival of the church year, occurring fifty days after Easter. Celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit to the crowd gathered in Jerusalem. The color for this festival is red.

Phos Hilaron Greek name for the canticle in Evening Prayer which begins "Joyous light of glory."

Piscina A special drain in the sacristy which goes directly into the ground, used for disposal of baptismal water and wine remaining after the Holy Communion.

Prayer at the Close of the Day Night prayer service used as the last worship before retiring for the night. Also known as Compline.

Predella Raised platform in the chancel on which the altar is placed.

Presiding Minister The ordained pastor who presides at a worship service.

Prie-dieu French term for "prayer desk"; used for Daily Prayer services, confirmation, and weddings.

Processional Cross A cross or crucifix on a tall staff used to lead processions.

Processional Torch See torch.

Propers The varying portions of the liturgy which are appointed for each day of the church year; include the Prayer of the Day, Psalm, lessons, proper verse, proper offertory, and proper preface.

Protector Linen White linen cloth placed on the mensa between the cerecloth and the fair linen, to which the parament may be attached.

Pulpit Raised reading desk in the chancel from which the gospel is read and the sermon preached.

Purificator Square linen napkin used to cleanse the rim of the chalice during the distribution of Holy Communion.

Purple Liturgical color for Lent,

symbolizing penitence. Also the alternate color for Advent, symbolizing the royal color of the coming King.

Pyx See host box.

Red Bright red liturgical color, symbolic of the fire of the Holy Spirit. Used on the Day of Pentecost, Reformation Day, martyrs' days, and certain church occasions such as ordination and the dedication of a church building.

Reredos Carved stone or wood panel behind and above an altar.

Responsive Prayer Brief liturgical order of versicles and responses.

Retable A step or shelf at the rear of the mensa of an eastwall altar, on which cross, candlesticks, and flowers are placed. Also known as gradine.

Rite The text and ceremonies of a liturgical worship service.

Rubric From the Latin for "red"; a direction for the proper conduct of a worship service. Rubrics are usually printed in red.

Sacrament A rite commanded by Christ which uses an earthly element as a sign of God's grace. The two sacraments are Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

Sacristy A room used for storage and preparation of items needed in worship; also used for vesting before services.

Sanctuary The section of the chancel which immediately surrounds the altar.

Sanctuary Lamp A constantly burning candle suspended from the ceiling or mounted on the chancel wall; in Roman Catholic and some Episcopal churches, symbolizes the Reserved Sacrament.

Scarlet The deep red liturgical color used from the Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday) through Maundy Thursday. Symbolic of the blood of the Passion.

Sedilia Seats in the chancel for the worship leaders.

Sign of the Cross Gesture of tracing the outline of the cross with the hand, as a mark of belonging to Christ in Holy Baptism.

Spoon Perforated utensil used to remove foreign particles from wine in the chalice.

Stole Cloth band in liturgical color worn over the alb or surplice around a pastor's neck and hanging to the knees. Signifies ordination and the yoke of obedience to Christ.

Stripping of the Altar Ceremony at the conclusion of the Maundy Thursday liturgy, in which all appointments, linens, and paraments are removed from the altar and chancel in preparation for Good Friday. Symbolic of Christ's humiliation by the soldiers.

Sunday of the Passion The first day of Holy Week, also known as Palm Sunday. Commemorates both Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem and his crucifixion. The color is scarlet or purple.

Superfrontal Short parament which hangs over the front of the mensa.

Surplice White vestment worn over the cassock; used especially for Daily Prayer services.

Tenebrae From the Latin for "darkness"; a service sometimes used evenings during Holy Week, in which candles on a hearse are gradually extinguished.

Thurible Vessel in which incense is burned; also known as a censer.

Thurifer The person who carries the thurible.

Torch Large candle on a tall staff carried in processions.

Torchbearer The person who carries the processional torch.

Transfiguration Festival celebrated on the Last Sunday after the Epiphany, recalling Christ's transfiguration on the mountain. The color is white.

Triduum The Latin for "three days"; the three sacred days from Maundy Thursday evening through Easter Evening, which together celebrate the unity of the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection.

Tunicle Eucharistic vestment less ornate than a dalmatic; may be worn by the junior assisting minister at festive Holy Communion services.

Veil Cloth placed over sacramental vessels before and after the celebration of Holy Communion.

Vespers From the Latin for "evening"; an evening worship service of Scripture readings and prayer. Also known as Evening Prayer.

Vigil A liturgical service on the eve of a festival, such as the Easter Vigil.

White Liturgical color used on festivals of Christ, the weeks of Christmas and Easter, The Holy Trinity, and certain saints' days. Symbolizes joy, gladness, purity, and the light of Christ.

Glossary

Acolyte From the Greek for "to follow"; a liturgical assistant who serves in various roles as crucifer, torchbearer, bannerbearer, bookbearer, candlelighter, and server.
Advent From the Latin for "coming"; the four weeks before Christmas which constitute the first season of the liturgical year. The color is blue or purple.
Advent Wreath A wreath with four candles, used during the four weeks of Advent.
Affirmation of Baptism Rite used for confirmation, reception of new members, and restoration to membership.
Alb Full-length white vestment used in worship since the sixth century. Usually worn with cincture.
Alms Basin Large plate in which the smaller offering places are received.
Altar Table in the chancel used for the celebration of the Holy Communion. It is the central furnishing and focus of the worship space.
Altar Antependium Parament hung in the center of the altar, covering part of the front of the altar.
Altar Rail Railing enclosing the chancel at which people stand or kneel to receive Holy Communion.
Ambo Another name for the pulpit, reading desk, or lectern.
Amice White linen cloth resembling a collar which is often worn with an alb.
Ante-Communion That portion of the Holy Communion liturgy preceding the Great Thanksgiving.
Antependium Parament for pulpit and lectern.
Apse The semicircular (or polygonal) projection or alcove at the end of the chancel.
Ascension Principal festival occurring forty days after Easter, which celebrates Christ's ascension to heaven. The color is white.
Ashes Symbol of repentance and mortality used in the Ash Wednesday liturgy; made by burning palms from previous year's Sunday of the Passion procession.
Ash Wednesday First day of Lent; occurs between February 4 and March 10. Name derives from the ancient practice of placing ashes on worshipers' foreheads. The color is black or purple.
Asperges Ceremony during the renewal of baptismal vows during the Easter Vigil, in which water from the font is sprinkled over the congregation as a remembrance of their Baptism.
Assisting Minister Lay or ordained person who assists the presiding minister in worship leadership.
Banner Fabric hanging carried in processions.
Baptism The sacrament of water and the Holy Spirit, in which we are joined to Christ's death and resurrection and initiated into the church.
Baptistery The place where the baptismal font is located.
Black Liturgical color for Ash Wednesday; symbolizes ashes, repentance, and humiliation.
Blue Liturgical color for Advent; symbolizes hope.
Burse Square fabric-covered case in which the Communion linens are carried to and from the altar.
Candle Tall wax light burned during worship services; symbolic of Christ, the Light of the world.
Candlelighter Device used to light and extinguish candles.
Candlestick Ornamental base holder for candle.
Cassock Full-length black vestment worn under surplice, cotta, or alb.
Censer Vessel in which incense is burned; also called thurible.
Cerecloth First cloth placed on the mensa; usually made of wax-treated linen.
Chalice Cup used for the wine in the Holy Communion.
Chancel Elevated area in front of the nave where altar and pulpit are located.
Chasuble The principal vestment for the Holy Communion liturgy; worn like a poncho by the presiding minister over alb and stole.
Choir In traditional church architecture, the part of the chancel between the nave and the sanctuary.
Chrism Fragrant oil used for anointing in Holy Baptism.
Chrismon From the words "Christ monograms"; symbols of Christ used to decorate Christmas trees.
Chrisom White garment placed on a person after Baptism as a symbol of being clothed in the righteousness and eternal life of Christ.
Christ the King The last Sunday of the church year, which celebrates the kingship of Christ. The color is white.
Christmas Principal festival of the church year which celebrates Christ's birth or nativity; also known as the Nativity of Our Lord. The color is white.
Ciborium Tall covered vessel which holds wafers for the Holy Communion.
Cincture Rope belt worn with an alb.
Compline From the Latin for "complete," referring to the prayers which completed the day's worship. An order for night

prayer used as the last worship service before bed. Also known as Prayer at the Close of the Day.

Confirmation Liturgical form of Affirmation of Baptism, marking the completion of a period of instruction in the Christian faith.

Cope Long cape worn by worship leader, lay or ordained, for certain processions and ceremonial occasions.

Corporal Square white linen cloth placed on the center of the mensa, on which the eucharistic vessels are placed for the celebration of the Holy Communion.

Corpus Carved figure of Christ attached to a cross; together, cross and corpus are a crucifix.

Cotta Short white vestment worn over cassock by acolytes and choir members.

Credence Shelf or table at chancel wall which holds sacramental vessels and offering plates.

Crosier Crook-shaped staff carried by a bishop.

Crucifer The person who carries the processional cross.

Crucifix Cross with a corpus attached.

Cruet Glass vessel containing wine for the Holy Communion. An additional cruet may hold water for the lavabo.

Daily Prayer The daily services of readings and prayer, including Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Prayer at the Close of the Day (Compline).

Dalmatic Eucharistic vestment sometimes worn by an assisting minister during festive celebrations of the Holy Communion.

Dossal Fabric hanging behind and above altar.

East Wall The wall behind the altar, regardless of whether the wall is geographically to the east.

Eastwall Altar An altar attached to the wall.

Easter Principal festival of the church year which celebrates Christ's resurrection. Easter Day (which occurs between March 22 and April 25) is known as the Resurrection of Our Lord, and the color is gold or white. The Easter season lasts for fifty days, and the color is white.

Easter Vigil Liturgy on Easter Eve which includes the lighting of the new fire and procession of the paschal candle, readings from Scripture, Holy Baptism and the renewal of baptismal vows, and Holy Communion. The color is gold or white.

Elements The earthly elements used in the celebration of the sacraments: bread and wine in Holy Communion, and water in Holy Baptism.

Epiphany Principal festival celebrated on January 6, marking the visit of the magi to Jesus and the consequent revelation of Christ to the whole world. The color is white.

Epistle Side The right side of the altar as the congregation faces it.

Eucharist From the Greek for "thanksgiving"; a name for the Holy Communion.

Evening Prayer An evening worship service of Scripture readings and prayer; also known as Vespers.

Ewer A pitcher used for carrying water to the baptismal font.

Fair Linen Top white linen cloth covering the mensa of the altar; symbolizing the winding sheet used in the burial of Christ's body.

Fall Term sometimes used for paraments on altar, pulpit, and lectern.

Flagon Pitcherlike vessel from which wine is poured into the chalice for the Holy Communion.

Font From the Latin for "fountain"; the pool or basin which holds water for Holy Baptism.

Fraction Ceremonial breaking of the bread in the Holy Communion liturgy.

Free-standing Altar An altar which is not attached to the wall, and behind which the ministers stand (facing the congregation) for the celebration of Holy Communion.

Frontal Parament which covers the entire front of the altar, from the top edge of the mensa down to the predella.

Frontlet Narrow altar parament usually hung in pairs and extending only part way to the predella.

Funeral Pall Large white cloth cover placed on the coffin when brought into the nave for the burial liturgy.

Gold Liturgical color for Easter Eve and Easter Day, giving special prominence to this most important festival of the year.

Good Friday The Friday in Holy Week which observes Christ's crucifixion and death. The chancel and altar are bare of all appointments, paraments, and linens.

Gospel Side Left side of the altar as the congregation faces it.

Gradine From the Latin for "step"; a step or shelf at the rear of the mensa of an eastwall altar, on which cross, candlesticks, and flowers are placed. Also known as retable.

Green Liturgical color for the nonfestival seasons after Pentecost and Epiphany; symbolic of growth.

Hearse A triangular candelabrum used for Tenebrae.

Holy Trinity First Sunday after Pentecost, which celebrates the doctrine of the Trinity (one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). The color is white.

Holy Week The week between the Sunday of the Passion (Palm Sunday) and Easter, which recalls the events of the last days of Christ's life. The color is scarlet or purple for Sunday through Wednesday, and scarlet or white on Maundy Thursday. No paraments are used on Good Friday.

Host Wafer, made of unleavened bread, for the Holy Communion.

Host Box Short, round, covered container which holds additional hosts for the Holy Communion. Also known as pyx.

Incense Mixture of resins for ceremonial burning, symbolic of our prayers rising to God (see Psalm 141); one of the gifts of the magi to Jesus on the Epiphany.

Intinction From the Latin for "to dip"; the practice of administer-

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Preparation for the Church Year

The church year is a wonderful way in which we recall and celebrate the mighty acts of God. It is a reminder of God's constant activity—not only God's interventions into human history, but also his grace-filled activity among us now. Through the liturgical year we realize that we are a part of God's ongoing saving and loving activity.

For many centuries the church year calendar has shaped our worship: the readings, the sermons, the hymns and other music, the color of the paraments, and the appearance of worship space. Through a rich observance of the church year, each season and festival can make its fullest impact on the assembled congregation. The church is the grateful recipient and careful guardian of the liturgical year. Faithful observance of it is both a privilege and a responsibility. In its ministry of preparation, it is important for the altar guild to study the background and significance of the various liturgical seasons and festivals. Each day of the church year has its own unique character and message, determined by the appointed lessons for the day. Close attention to these lessons enables us to celebrate meaningfully the events in the life of our Lord and in church history.

The church year consists most basically of two parts. The

first half recalls and celebrates the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. This is the festival half of the year, and it in turn has two divisions. The Christmas cycle consists of the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. During this time the church focuses on the prophecies and events surrounding the incarnation. The Easter cycle is composed of the seasons of Lent and Easter, from Ash Wednesday through the Day of Pentecost. During these weeks we prepare for and observe the events surrounding our Lord's passion, death, and resurrection, and his sending of the Holy Spirit.

The second half of the church year is a more ordinary, nonfestival time. It is the season after Pentecost, known as the Time of the Church. This season begins with the Holy Trinity (First Sunday after Pentecost) and concludes with the festival of Christ the King (Last Sunday after Pentecost). During these weeks, the church concentrates on Christ's public ministry—his sermons, parables, and miracles. It is a time of growth in faith, hope, and love—and thus green paraments are used as a symbol of this growth.

Principal festivals of the church year are Easter Day, the Ascension of Our Lord, the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Trinity, Christmas Day, and the Epiphany of Our Lord. Interspersed throughout the year are lesser festivals, commemorations, days commemorating events in church history, and other occasions.

Advent

Advent consists of the four weeks before Christmas. The name of this first season of the liturgical year comes from a Latin word which means "coming." Advent focuses on this "coming" in three ways: Christ coming in the past as the baby at Bethlehem, Christ coming in the present in Word and Sacraments and in the fellowship of the church, and Christ coming again in the future at the end of time. In Advent we prepare for the celebration of Christ's coming in the incarnation, but more importantly we prepare for his second coming, when he will make all things new and judge the world in righteousness.

The preferred color for Advent is blue, the color of hope. The alternate color is purple, the royal color of the coming King. Blue, however, helps make apparent the differences between Advent and Lent.

One of the themes of Advent is darkness, and it is thus appropriate to use fewer candles during these four weeks. An Advent wreath may be hung or set near the altar. The wreath is a circle with four candles, and it may be covered with greens. The candles may all be white or blue, or perhaps purple if purple paraments are used. The earlier practice of using three purple candles and one pink candle no longer reflects our calendar and lectionary. On the First Sunday in Advent, the first candle is lighted during the Psalm following the First Lesson. On the Second Sunday in Advent, the first candle is lighted prior to the service, and the second candle is lighted during the Psalm. An additional candle is thus lighted during each Sunday in Advent until all four are lighted.

Advent is a time for visual restraint and simplicity. It is appropriate to omit altar flowers during these weeks of preparation, in order to provide a marked contrast with the festivity of Christmas. When there are no flowers, vases are removed from the chancel.

Advent should not be confused with Christmas. Christmas decorations, such as a Christmas tree, should not appear during Advent.

Christmas

Christmas is the festive celebration of the Nativity of our Lord, the Word made flesh. This celebration lasts for twelve days—from Christmas Eve through Epiphany Eve.

The liturgical color for Christmas is white, symbolizing the light and purity of Christ and our great joy at his birth. White is used for the twelve days of Christmas, except for the festivals of St. Stephen (December 26) and of the Holy Innocents (December 28), when red is used in observance of their martyrdom.

Greens and wreaths may be placed in the nave and narthex,

and the chancel may be adorned with abundant poinsettias. Plants, however, are never placed on the altar itself, nor should it be obstructed by decorations. If there is sufficient room, a Christmas tree (never artificial) may be set up. The tree may be bare or decorated with white lights and chrismons. If lights are used, the tree should be made fireproof. Chrismons (taken from the word "Christ monograms") are symbols of Christ which may be made by the altar guild or other members of the parish. Decorations for Christmas should not be put up until after worship on the Fourth Sunday in Advent, because early decorating robs both Advent and Christmas of their full meaning.

Especially for Christmas Eve services, candles may be placed in windows of the nave and on the ends of pews as brilliant symbols of Christ, the Light of the world. If hand candles are distributed to worshipers, all fire safety precautions should be taken. For example, the altar guild should be certain that fire extinguishers are charged and readily accessible.

A Christmas creche may be placed near the altar, although it should not detract from the prominence of the altar itself. The figures may be carried in the entrance procession on Christmas Eve or Day and then placed in the creche. The figures of the magi should be reserved until Epiphany. During the season of Christmas, the magi may be placed on a window or table near the rear of the nave or in the narthex, as a reminder of their journey to Bethlehem and of the relationship between Christmas and Epiphany.

The altar guild needs to be prepared for large numbers of communicants at Christmas liturgies and should have adequate supplies of bread and wine on the offertory table or credence, and an ample number of purificators on the credence.

Epiphany

The Epiphany of our Lord is celebrated on January 6, marking the manifestation of Christ to the whole world. The coming of the magi to Bethlehem is reported in the gospel reading for this festival; this event may be made vivid by adding the figures of

the magi to the creche during the entrance procession. Figures of the shepherds and perhaps the animals may be removed in advance.

White is the appointed color for Epiphany, a reminder that it is a festival of light.

On Epiphany Eve or following the Epiphany Day liturgy, there may be a ceremony of the burning of the greens. This may take place in the church parking lot or another safe place. Municipal permission and/or fire protection may be necessary.

The Epiphany Season

The first and last Sundays after the Epiphany are festivals. The Second through the Eighth Sundays after the Epiphany use green paraments as a symbol of our growth in knowing Jesus as God's Son.

The Baptism of Our Lord

The First Sunday after the Epiphany is the Baptism of Our Lord, in observance of his Baptism by St. John the Baptist in the Jordan River and, in that event, Jesus' designation as the Son of God. Paraments for this day are white, since it is a festival of Christ. A baptismal festival may be held on this day (see chap. 6 regarding preparations for Holy Baptism).

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

The Transfiguration of Our Lord is celebrated on the Last Sunday after the Epiphany as a climax to the season and a prelude to Lent. Paraments for the Transfiguration are white.

Ash Wednesday

Since at least the seventh century, Ash Wednesday has been observed as the first day of Lent. The name is taken from the ancient tradition of placing ashes on the foreheads of penitents. In the biblical tradition, ashes represent God's condemnation of sin; human dependence on God for life; humiliation and repentance. Ashes are a reminder of death: "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

Ashes for the imposition are made from palms from the previous year's observance of the Sunday of the Passion. The palms are cut into small pieces and burned with rubbing alcohol or solid fuel firestarters. After enough has been burned, work the ash through a fine wire mesh sieve. The ash may be mixed with a small amount of oil or water and placed in a small bowl or other container for the imposition. A lavabo bowl and towel will need to be provided for cleansing the minister's hands after the imposition of ashes.

Ash Wednesday, the most penitential day of the church year, may occur between February 4 and March 10.

Paraments for Ash Wednesday may be black (the color of ashes, humiliation, and mourning) or purple (the color of penitence).

Flowers are not appropriate on Ash Wednesday, and the empty vases should also be removed from the chancel. Other festive decorations, such as banners, are also removed. From Ash Wednesday through the Saturday of Holy Week, crosses, pictures, and statues may be veiled with unbleached linen or purple fabric, as a demonstration that Lent is a time for austerity and purification.

Holy Communion is celebrated on Ash Wednesday.

Lent

Lent is the forty-day season (not including Sundays) of preparation for Easter. Traditionally, Lent has two primary themes—Baptism and penitence—both as preparation for a worthy celebration of the paschal feast. Lent does not focus on our Lord's passion; that is the focus of Holy Week.

Paraments for Lent are purple, the color of penitence.

Flowers, being a symbol of joy, may be omitted during Lent in order to help the congregation absorb the penitential character of the season. Empty vases, of course, are always removed when not in use.

The Sunday of the Passion

The first day of Holy Week is the Sunday of the Passion, also known as Palm Sunday. The mood of this day, reflecting its double name, is a mixture of triumph and tragedy. We observe

"In most cases *proistami* seems to have the sense 'to lead,' but context shows in each case that one must take into account sense 'to care for . . .' this is explained by the fact that caring was the obligation of leading members of the infant church. . . ."[4]

The gift of leading is also associated with the pastor. The three principle passages dealing with the pastor-elder all use some form of this verb (1 Thess 5:12; I Tim. 3:5; 5:17) indicating that a pastor must be a good leader. He is the example and the teacher of leadership principles to the laymen. The responsibilities of church leadership are so complex and far reaching that a wise pastor will encourage the gift of leadership among the lay elders. Such gifted lay leaders share with the pastor the responsibility of envisioning the church's work and articulating that vision to the congregation.

The Gift of Prophecy

The pastor's primary function is preaching the Word of God. There are spiritual gifts which relate to this important function. Prophecy is one such gift. Ordinarily prophecy is interpreted to mean foretelling future events. It does have that function at times, but most of the prophecy found in scripture is straightforward preaching which applies revealed truth to the current situation of the people of God. Not all preaching is prophecy but it is one kind of preaching needed in every congregation. A lay-elder may also have the gift of prophecy, with unusual insight into the spiritual needs of the congregation. The pastor should cherish and nurture the gift of prophecy wherever he may find it among the lay-elders.

The apostle Paul in his first letter to Timothy makes an interesting statement regarding the gift of prophecy as it relates to the eldership.

> *Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. (I Tim. 4:14)*

Apparently at Timothy's ordination elders were given the insight by the Holy Spirit to identify Timothy's gift for ministry. Paul advises Timothy to develop that gift by diligent study and faithful service.

Pastoral Care

Since both pastors and lay-elders engage in pastoral care the gift of shepherding will equip them for this ministry. The flock of God not only needs oversight but they also need to be fed and guided and guarded. Pastoral care is an art learned from the Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. He imparts through the Holy Spirit the enabling to care for God's people. Pastoral care implies a direct personal ministry to the people of the congregation. To have the insights, skills and patience to shepherd the great diversity of people which make up any one congregation requires divine assistance. Many churches suffer from the lack of pastoral care. If the pastor must carry this whole load in addition to his other required duties, the individual needs of the fellowship will go unattended. The pastor may multiply his ability to do the work of pastoral care by finding and developing among the elders those with gifts for this work.

The Gifts of Healings

Christ gave to His church the ministry of healing. In Christ's name and by His authority the church is commissioned to heal. The prescribed order of the healing ministry is revealed in the scripture. When Christians are sick they are to call the elders of the church. The elders are instructed by the scriptures to anoint the sick with oil and pray over them in the name of Jesus.

Since the elders have been assigned this ministry it is reasonable to believe that the gifts of healings are most frequently distributed among the elders. The Biblical order for a healing service calls for a plurality of elders to participate in anointing and prayer. When the Biblical order is carried out the integrity of the ministry of healing is maintained. Christ is always projected as the Healer. The elders and the whole church should look to Christ as Head over His church to give the eldership the gifts of healings necessary to meet their congregational needs.

Since the deacons of the church are not engaged in oversight

and pastoral care their gifts coincide with their ministries. The New Testament suggests a number of gifts that should be exercised by the *diaconate*. The deacons of the church need gifts that fit them for ministries of compassion. They serve the practical needs of the family of God and sometimes the non-Christian community. Peter and Paul both speak of the gift of service. Certainly every deacon and deaconess needs the gift of service and they need the strength which God supplies to perform that service (1 Pet. 4:11). The deacon who devotes his time to ministering in a sick room will need the gift of showing mercy. One man of God spent years in a large city hospital shaving patients, trimming their toe nails and finger nails. This unglamorous ministry opened up doors of blessing and gospel outreach that many a pastor would envy. The gift of the Spirit is always exactly what is needed to do the work, but the gift can function only when the believer has consecrated himself to service.

The Gift of Helps

The same Holy Spirit who gifted men in the time of Moses to work in precious metal and other highly skilled crafts necessary in constructing the tabernacle, gifts deacons today to use tools to serve Christ in the caring of the church's physical properties. The hammer and the saw used in the name of Christ is a ministry. The oversight of the buildings to maintain proper repairs and an attractive appearance is also a ministry unto the Lord. The deacons or other lay leaders called by the body and by the Lord to these ministries have every right to believe that the Holy Spirit will gift them for their labors.

The Gift of Giving

The very nature of the deacon's work would give him a concern for Christian stewardship. The deacon seeks to use the church's resources to help those in need. What better gift might a deacon possess than that of giving. Paul explains the gift of giving should be exercised with liberality (Rom. 12:8). The generosity of the deacons should provide an example for the whole congregation. The consistent giving of leadership encourages every member to honor the Lord by their own faithfulness in giving.

The Gift of Faith

Some gifts are distributed to all the leaders of the church and among these is the gift of faith. It must be understood that faith in this context does not refer to saving faith but rather a working faith. It is the faith to believe that God will work out His plan and provide abundantly for it. Leadership may dream dreams and have visions of outreach and enlargement, but they will never be launched without faith. Most of God's work must be undertaken with inadequate resources and in the face of seemingly unsurmountable obstacles. The success of the project can only be attributed to the fact that God is pleased with the faith of His people. Faith unlocks for the church the invisible supply of resources in the heavenly places. The present affluence of churches in the western world has not removed the need to trust God for His work. The church on the move is the church whose pastor, elders, and deacons seek God's will for the church's ministry and in simple faith believe Him for the resources to accomplish that ministry.

The gifts of the Spirit speak of the continued need of the supernatural in the life of the church. While churches own properties, handle large sums of money, recruit and train people, the church is not just another organization or a business or a corporation. The success of the work of Christ's church has a divine origin. Whatever helpful ideas may be drawn from modern management concepts and other disciplines of learning, they cannot replace the need for the gifts of the Spirit.

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[1] W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, University of Chicago, Chicago, 1974 edition, p. 562.

[2] A. B. Simpson, *Christ in the Bible Series: I Corinthians*, Christian Publications, Inc., Harrisburg, Pa., p. 102.

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Name of Clergyperson: _____

Church/Agency making request: _____

Address of Church/Agency: _____

City _____ State/Prov_____ Zip/Code _____

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Sexual Misconduct Background Check

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Name of Clergyperson: _____

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UFMCC Clergy Credentials & Concerns Committee
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Name of Clergyperson: _____

Church/Agency making request: _____

Address of Church/Agency: _____

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Reading Assignments and Suggestions

* Indicates required reading
+ Indicates any one of these may be chosen to fulfill the reading requirement

Homosexuality and Scripture

Jonathon Loved David, Tom Horner
+ The Church and the Homosexual, John McNeill
+ Is the Homosexual My Neighbor? Scanzoni & Mollencott
+ Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality, John Boswell
+ Gay Liberation: A Biblical Approach, George Edwards
+ Things they never told you in Sunday School, David Day

Worship

+ A Manual for Acolytes, Michno
+ The Altar Guild Book, Gent and Sturges
+ Altar Guild Handbook, Stauffer
Celebrating Sacraments, Stoutzenberger

Peer Listening - Deacon Ministry

+ Deacon Family ministry Plan
+ Building Relationships Through Pastoral Visitation
+ Christian Caregiving: A Way of Life, Haugk
The Deacon at Work Agar
The Work of the Deacon and Deaconess Nichols
+ Equipping Deacons as Partners in Ministry Webb

Scripture

* ~~A~~ good Concordance and Bible
+ The New Testament as the Church's Book
+ The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church, James Smart.
+ The Liberating Word, ed. Letty Russell

Preaching

+ ~~Designing~~ The Sermon, James Earl Massey
+ Liberation Preaching, Justo Gonzalez & Catherine Gonzalez
+ Creative Preaching, Elizabeth Achtemeier
+ Preaching Jesus Christ, David Buttrick
+ Homiletic: Moves and Structures, David Buttrick